Interview with Theresa Healy

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Women Ambassadors Series

AMBASSADOR THERESA HEALY

Interviewed by: Ann Miller Morin

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HEALY: Let me begin, Ann, by talking about my early years and education, which is an easy matter for me to discuss from the top of my head. I'll keep on going and as soon as I get to a point where I will have to consider what I want to say or search my memory, I'll stop.

Let me begin then with place of birth, hometown. I was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1932. My parents had married in 1930. The first of the four children, my sister Mary Catherine Maureen was born in 1931. I came along a year later, my brother Joe was born in 1934, and the last of us, my brother Frank was born in 1939. That just gives you the details of the birth.

Now, parents' background. My father, Anthony J. Healy, was born in Belfast in northern Ireland, one of about eight children. His father had died when he was quite young, and I know my father mentioned being an apprentice to a foundry when he was ten or eleven or twelve, or whatever. He didn't have much schooling, of course. He generally said he was in school for three years before finally going into this apprentice program. Things in Belfast were very bad in the early 1920s and in 1923 my grandmother, Catherine Reid

Healy, I believe it was, decided to take all her children and immigrate to Canada where her oldest daughter, Catherine, had gone some time earlier than 1923 with her new husband to settle down and marry. My grandmother then took her entire family from Belfast to the Saskatoon, Saskatchewan area. My father farmed with some of his brothers for about five years. And in 1928 he and two of his brothers came down to the New York City area.

My father worked, I believe, in a garage for a year or two, but by the time he married my mother in 1930 he was working for the Hudson and Manhattan railroad, which was a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania railroad, and he worked for the Hudson and Manhattan through its many changes until, I believe, it became part of the PATH system in New York City. He worked for the railroad until he retired.

As I say, I have no relatives I'm aware of left in Ireland on my father's side, but I do have a fair number of Canadian relatives based on my Canadian aunts and uncles and I've been in touch with a handful of them off and on throughout the years.

My mother was Mary Catherine Kennedy. She was the oldest of seven or eight children born to, let's see, my grandfather's name was James Kennedy and my grandmother's name on the maternal side was Mary Boyle. My grandfather Kennedy farmed in the Maas area of County Donegal near the Great Geebarra Bay. It was a small farm and not very prosperous. My mother, again, did not have much opportunity for schooling. As the oldest of seven or eight children she was soon recruited by her own mother to help take care of the younger children.

When my mother was 23 she emigrated to the United States. I know she spent six months with a couple of aunts in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, coming to know something about the United States including using an indoor bathroom, I presume, for the first time in her life. Then she began working as a live-in maid for a family, or perhaps two different families, for the next three to five years. By this time she had been joined by a couple of brothers and a sister. They were all living together in Brooklyn, New York, and my mother worked

as a waitress, in a dinette, I guess. It was in Brooklyn that my parents married in 1930. Now that takes care, I guess, of parents' background. Is there anything else, Ann, that you would like to know about parents' background?

Q: No, I think that's very concise and very helpful. The fact is that because of circumstances you really didn't have grandparents in your life, did you?

HEALY: No. I did have aunts and uncles, though, because my father had two brothers living in the New York area and my mother had a sister and a brother. One brother did return to Ireland with his family. He is the one who assumed the running of the family farm for my grandfather and inherited the farm formally or informally, I do not know, when my grandfather died.

Q: Was it a close family situation?

HEALY: Pretty close. Yes. My mother, whatever her reasons, had never been back to Ireland on a visit. Not that there was much money available for trips back to Ireland, but her sister managed to go back now and again, my Aunt Bridget, that would be. But my mother never went back to Ireland until 1958. On one of my first possibilities in the Foreign Service, I stopped off in Ireland to visit my aunts and my uncles. That would be '58. It was as a result of this visit and the persuasion of my uncles that I talked my mother into visiting Ireland for the first time in what would then be thirty-seven, thirty-six years. I'm afraid that the emotional shock of going back to Ireland in 1959 was really a little bit too much for her.

Q: Really?

HEALY: Her parents had been alive when she left. The youngest of her brothers and sisters, Aunt Annie, had been a girl of ten when she left Ireland, and Danny at that point was pushing 50. So it was really a very emotional time for her and she never went back to Ireland again after that. I have been back off and on as I pass to and from European assignments. My sister finally managed to make a trip to Ireland about two years ago. On

the other hand, when it comes to my Aunt Bridget's family, Aunt Bridget went back about every four or five years, and in fact has quite a story about almost being caught in Ireland when the war broke out in Europe in 1939, and having to pack up her children and grab one of the last ships out of the Irish ports or Liverpool, I'm not certain what.

Q: Do you have any emotional ties to Ireland when you go there?

HEALY: I know these are my aunts and my uncles and my first cousins but...

Q: The country itself?

HEALY: Oh, the country is a beautiful country. But no, I feel myself thoroughly American. I had this dichotomy of feeling. I know in theory that my heritage is 100% Irish all the way back. But on the other hand, I also feel that somehow or another I must have had relatives who came over with the Mayflower or whatever, and I identify very much with the French and Indian war and the Pilgrims and the revolution and things like that. Given the prevalence of the name Healy and Kennedy in this country, for all I know I do have relatives who came over two hundred years ago.

Q: Of course.

HEALY: Religious training: both my mother and my father, of course, were brought up as Roman Catholics, and instilled the same training in us, further reinforced by about 100% exposure to Catholic education. I had eight years at St. Agatha grammar school in the heart of Brooklyn, south Brooklyn. I had four years at the Bishop McDonnell Memorial High School, a diocesan high school, a scholarship high school in Brooklyn. Then I had four years at St. John's University, which then was also in Brooklyn, although St. John's is now located in Jamaica.

Q: Were any of those all girls?

HEALY: The elementary school, of course, was coeducational, but secondary school was all girls. The college, St. John's University, was mixed again, coed. I don't know if there is anything else to say about religious training except that, of course, it was a very strong religious training. The educational system was, again, strong. But it was also basically a very good academic education apart from the religious aspects of it. And Bishop McDonnell Memorial High School in particular took great pride in its academic training program, since it was designed to educate the scholarship holders from every catholic elementary school in Brooklyn and Queens.

Q: Oh, really?

HEALY: Yes. It was a scholarship program and the top two or three girls from each of the grammar schools had a free education at this high school.

Q: You must have had a very good education.

HEALY: It was the kind of education that I found, fortunately, stacked up very well with the kind of education provided by private schools in New England. Three years of Latin, three years of French, four years of history, three years of math, three years of science, the whole thing.

Q: Very academic.

HEALY: And even St. John's, while not, of course particularly in those days, first ranked academically, still required for the bachelor's degree in history, which I took, such old-fashioned courses of study as 18 credits in philosophy and six credits in math and eight credits in science, etcetera, etcetera. Q: Were any of your aunts and uncles, nuns or priests?

HEALY: No, interestingly enough - let me take that back a minute. Despite the strong religious training, on my mother's side nobody, so far as I'm aware, had any interest in the

religious life or took any preliminary training toward the priesthood or toward becoming a nun.

On my father's side, on the other hand, the eldest brother, Uncle Andy, who lived in Patterson, he was very, very religious and I think almost every one of his four or five sons made some kind of effort at pursuing a priestly vocation. Only one actually ended up becoming a priest. He's a missionary in Japan.

Again, another one of my father's brothers, my Uncle Pat, had only two children, but his daughter, Eileen, who was almost exactly my age, Eileen was thinking in terms of becoming a nun but that never worked out despite some early preliminary training. Despite the kind of background we had had, we are not one of the religious families where everybody becomes a nun or a priest. I'll leave religious training then, if you have no other questions.

Q: Fine.

HEALY: I'll go on to relations with siblings. There's nothing much to be said there. We were all fairly close in age except for the youngest, Frank. My sister, Mary Catherine, was a year older. She attended St. Agatha's school a year ahead of me. She attended the Bishop McDonnell Memorial High School a year ahead of me, and she went on to St. John's University a year ahead of me.

Maureen wasn't initially interested in going to college, but at some point in her final year in high school she decided she was going to become a school teacher.I knew that I wanted to go to college from an early age, but I didn't know quite what I wanted to be. I ended up taking a degree in history simply because that was the subject in which I had my best marks in and it was the one that interested me most.

My brother, Joe, went the equivalent of Bishop McDonnell, St. Michael's High School in Brooklyn. He took a business degree at St. John's and after two or three years

investigating jobs and working at jobs in the business world, he went back to school to take his degree in elementary education and became an elementary school teacher as well.

Q: Oh, so that's two who were teachers.

HEALY: Yes, and I taught as well, of course, although I didn't take my degree in education.

Frank was the youngest and unfortunately suffered from following three A students. Poor Frank was a B student, which we thought was almost totally unacceptable in the context of the marks we were making. Frank was always the happy one of the family. My mother always compared him to one of her younger brothers, who hated school but knew how to run a business. She decided that Frank was the one who was going to get into business and make money. As it turned out, Frank developed diabetes when he was about 13 and died in 1980 when he was 41.

Q: Did you fight with your sister?

HEALY: Not much, because I tended to be a quiet person. Maureen would indeed try to dominate and I just went my own way without any fights.

Q: Passive resistance.

HEALY: Passive resistance. Maureen was a more social person than I. I was more interested in reading books. If anything, I probably fought with Frank, although we didn't really fight. I was just trying very hard to get him to study hard and get my mother not to keep him home when the weather was bad. But I don't recollect that we had much in the way of fights. Our interests were all quite different. Maureen was interested in social things, I was interested in books, Joe was interested in basketball, and Frank was interested in going out with the boys and having fun.

Q: Who did you use to play with?

HEALY: Friends in the neighborhood. In elementary school my best friend was in my class at St. Agatha's. But Helen unfortunately came down with a rheumatic heart when she was in the sixth grade and she died when she was 17, after years in the hospital. I had some little friends around the neighborhood, but not much. Again, because I was too much of a bookworm, and I preferred reading a book to being on the street playing with the girls, although I was a tomboy until I was about eleven or twelve.

Q: Were you? What sort of things, playing ball?

HEALY: Playing handball with the boys, playing king, climbing trees. Climbing trees with a book in my hand. But in high school, unfortunately, it was more difficult to make friends because it took an hour by subway to get to high school, and of course an hour home. The girls themselves came from everywhere in Brooklyn and Queens and scattered immediately classes were over. I did belong to the orchestra in high school, as did my sister. That provided some friendships, but never very close because, as I say, the girls lived out on the island. We just wouldn't see each other except in classes.

Q: What did you play?

HEALY: Maureen and I both took piano lessons while we were growing up. Maureen had joined the orchestra before I went to Bishop's, so I joined it too. I was interested in music as was she. Maureen ended up started on the violin. All the girls who joined the orchestra played only the piano. Nobody played anything else. So they taught us all how to play an instrument. They taught Maureen violin, but Maureen doesn't have a good ear. She's a bit tone deaf and doesn't have a singing voice, for example. So after about a year on the violin, they assigned her to the piano. I do have a good ear and I stayed with the violin until, oh, I guess, a year before graduation. It turned out that the cellos were graduating and they needed a cello player. So I switched over to the cello. We weren't a

bad orchestra, but we were not very professional. It was a lot of fun though, and I enjoyed that part of high school.

Q: Now your family, you had two girls, and then two boys. You all seemed to have been treated exactly the same as far as getting ahead.

HEALY: I would say so.

Q: Obviously your parents must have encouraged you or you wouldn't have all been to college.

HEALY: They didn't discourage us from anything. I don't remember my father ever saying to me, “You have to go to college,” or my mother. Although when it came right down to the line and Maureen indicated she was going to work her way through St. John's, my mother was very discouraging.

Q: Oh, really?

HEALY: Well, only in the sense that things were always very tight financially. And she looked forward to having her oldest going to business and earning a salary and bringing more money into the house. So the thought that Maureen was going to go to St. John's, and would have to work her way through, and would not be bringing money into the house was, I think, something hard for my mother to understand. My father was always very encouraging. He just said flat out, “Go ahead. You'll have to earn the tuition, but you've got room and board here as long as you need it.” My mother was soon reconciled to this whole idea that we were all going to end up going to college.

Q: So your sister sort of paved the way for you?

HEALY: She did. In fact it was always very easy for me. One reason why I tended to be fairly quiet, is that Maureen would make the fight for the lipstick and I just wear the lipstick as soon as she did, although I was a year younger. When Maureen made the fight for a

house key, I got a housekeep. When Maureen was allowed to date, I was allowed to date. There is some advantage to having a sister who's only a year older.

Q: Yes. Were your folks bookish at all, Terry?

HEALY: No.

Q: No?

HEALY: No, as I say, my father only had three years of education and my mother only about five, so they were not inclined toward books. My father would have been inclined, I think, if he'd ever had the opportunity, but he didn't. It was really a matter of just working hard. In fact in those days, I remember my father had to work, this would be in the late thirties to the forties, it was a matter of seven days a week, ten or twelve hours a day before they finally went on strike sometime in the forties.

Q: Was this sort of a traditional marriage, where the father is the head of the household and the mother...

HEALY: Very much so. My father objected to my mother's one effort at working. Toward the end of the war, my mother, through a friend, had the opportunity to work on Governor's Island in the cafeteria there, for the army, I guess it would have been. My father, I can remember, objected to this. His salary was better now that the war had started, and he didn't feel there was any great need for it. But my mother very much wanted to. So she did, in fact, for three or four years. It worked out quite well because my father had always worked nights. The money was better working nights. So my mother would go off to work at nine in the morning, my father would be at home sleeping. My mother would get us off to school, I guess. We'd come home and my father would be making lunch and when we came home at three, my mother would be home. She only worked part-time. So it all worked out very easily. But that was the only job she held, except for little sewing jobs at home, the kind of thing you could do at home. My Aunt Bridget was a fine seamstress and

did a lot of very fine sewing at home, and my mother did some of that work, big bundles of sewing stuff.

Q: Did she really?

HEALY: Oh, yes, she'd travel somewhere and pick up a bundle of stuff, and you'd take it home and sew seams or something. My mother was never as good as my Aunt Bridget, at least that was my understanding. I think my mother didn't have the patience to be as good as Aunt Bridget. Aunt Bridget did a lot of fine sewing and my mother did plainer sewing, but the money - I think she gave that up fairly early on because the money was something like, god knows, $5 for a hundred of whatever.

Q: Did she teach you home skills, how to sew?

HEALY: She taught my sister, but I'm afraid I was somewhat resistant.

Q: No cooking, or...

HEALY: I wasn't interested in cooking. My sister was more interested and I remember she taught Maureen how to knit, but I wasn't interested. Anything that took me away from books was just... I was not interested.

Q: Did your Dad leave the raising of the children to your mother?

HEALY: Pretty much. Although when it came to discipline, my father was always there and my mother was always threatening us with my father. Particularly where the boys were concerned. When it comes to my sister and me, I don't recollect much discipline. I think my mother raised her hand to me once in my life. When I happened to be mentioning this to my sister sometime fairly recently, I guess we were talking to my sister's children, and I said, “Your Grandmother Healy only raised her hand to me once.” And my sister said, “She raised her hand to me a second time.” But I don't know what got into us, we much have been about seven or eight. My Aunt Bridget was visiting from a different section of

Brooklyn, from Flatbush in fact, with her oldest, my cousin Rosemary. Rosemary was six months younger than Maureen and six months older than I, and whatever deviltry got into us, we decided we were going to take Rosemary up to the local park, Sunset Park, about six blocks away. We were going to leave her up there. This is a little girl of six.

Q: Aren't kids awful?

HEALY: I can remember vividly, and my memory for my younger years is not very good, but I remember this. We walked into the house and my mother looked at us and I remember her voice saying, “Where's Rosemary?” Somehow or another, I guess it was my sister said, “We left her up in Sunset park.” Well, we realized this was the wrong thing to do because the next thing I remember, my mother raced out of the house, ran, presumably ran the six blocks, found Rosemary, brought her back and left her outside. At least she didn't punish us in front of Rosemary. She then came into the house and proceeded to break one wooden hanger on my sister and then reached for another wooden hanger and broke it on me. [laughter] I think that was a lesson to us. I never thought of doing anything like that again.

My sister tells me that my mother really laid a hand on her once in high school because Maureen had skipped a class, and my mother got a postcard in the mail saying, “Your daughter, Mary Healy, was absent from school today.” When Maureen came home, and my mother faced her with this card, Maureen never specified, because after all she must have been fourteen, fifteen, but I get the impression that if my mother had had a wooden coat hanger in hand that would have been broken as well.

The thing is things were understood. There were certain things you didn't do.

Q: And it was a loving situation.

HEALY: Definitely. But, as I say, there were certain things you didn't do. Now as to the boys, I cannot be too certain. My mother was more inclined to bring my father in on

disciplining the boys. And of course, by the time the boys needed discipline, my sister and I were going to high school or college, working at all kinds of jobs, never at home, never there on the weekend. Things could have happened there that I'd be unaware of. But my impression is that apart from the usual discipline problems, there was very little need for anything awful.

Q: Were there any major illnesses when you four were little?

HEALY: Thank god, no. Illnesses would have destroyed us because we simply didn't have the money.

Q: I know.

HEALY: But no, thank god, my mother was never ill. She never had an operation in her life. My father was ill a couple of times with ulcers. He had two ulcer operations before I was 16. But apart from that, he was never ill. My sister was never ill. I was never ill, thank god. Joe was never ill. Frank came down with the diabetes when he was twelve or thirteen, but by that time we were in a better situation financially, and of course diabetes is not a disastrous financial illness, disastrous as it is. But I would say the one thing you would have noticed is that we never got to the dentist. Because that was a luxury to go to the dentist. By the time we got to high school, it became important because Bishop McDonnell, dealing as it did with a fairly poor population of students, required a dental note in order to get a pass rate in gym.

Q: Oh, really?

HEALY: If you can believe it. I know that my sister, who had the highest grade point average in her freshman class, was not on the honor roll because she had a failure in gym, because she had not finished her dental work. I was in more or less the same situation, although I certainly did not have the highest average in my entering freshman class. But I received a failing mark in gym my first time around because I hadn't completed my dental

work. It was a necessary kind of thing to do because otherwise we would never have gone to the dentist. It was one of the... I still think about ... My sister, I know, feels that it changed her entire high school life because she figured well what the hell, if I can have the highest average in the class and not get on the honor roll, then I'm not going to work any more.

Q: Really?

HEALY: She still had a very good record in high school, but she didn't work for it. But it was necessary. Anyway that I think is enough about relations with siblings and grammar school and high school.

Relations with grandparents were non existent. My grandmother died in '31, I think. My grandmother Healy died in '31, my grandfather Healy had died sometime back about 1911 when my father was eleven. My grandmother Kennedy died at some point long before I can remember. My grandfather Kennedy died at some point when I probably was about ten. It would have been 1942 or 1943, because I can remember coming home noticing that my mother was not herself and when I asked what was wrong, she said she had a letter saying that her father had died. So grandparents just didn't exist.

Q: Right.

HEALY: Aunts and uncles, yes. We saw aunts and uncles, although there were family fights there now and again.

Q: Were you close to any of them?

HEALY: Geographically, you see, my father's brother, Andrew, was in Patterson. We managed to get over to Patterson perhaps once every third or fourth year. My father's brother, Patrick, lived in the neighborhood and my cousin Eileen was in my grammar school class. So we were fairly close to them and saw a fair amount of them. Although

once again it was a matter of... Living only six or seven blocks away meant a big difference in who you saw regularly.

Q: Yes.

HEALY: On my mother's side, Uncle Danny went back to Ireland with his family. Uncle Pat and his family, we were close to them but they lived up in the Bronx. That was a major undertaking in the subway. Her sister, Bridget, lived with her family in Flatbush, and again it was more than an hour to get out to Flatbush from south Brooklyn. So we were always in touch, but never that close.

Q: Did you have a favorite?

HEALY: Probably Uncle Pat and Auntie Katie up in the Bronx were the ones we saw most often and were the favorites. We saw more of them than any of the others. Of course, Uncle Pat Kennedy worked on the railroads as well. So there were times I would climb on board one - he worked for the city though - I'd climb on board, I guess it was the Independent, and I'd always look to see who the motorman was, to see if it might be my Uncle Pat.

Q: You mentioned your friend who died when she was 17.

HEALY: Helen.

Q: Now was that a traumatic experience?

HEALY: It was rather. It was rather. Helen was a very popular girl and the brightest in my grammar school class. She was an only child. She became very close to my family and her parents both worked, so Helen was, I guess, in these days we'd call her a latchkey child, although in those days it was fairly uncommon to have a child whose parents were both out at work. So Helen would frequently come down, we only lived a block away. We'd come down to my place after supper. I don't know what she did for supper. In any event

we were fairly close. I guess she developed a heart problem in sixth grade and was in Bellevue - was it Bellevue - no, King's County Hospital for about some months before they moved her out to St. Francis sanatorium for cardiac children in Rosslyn. It's still a famous children's hospital. I think today she could easily have been cured with an operation. In those days they just put them to bed and did the best they could for them. So I was corresponding with Helen, visited her once or twice, helped the Bonds with fund drives for St. Francis. And I remember it was quite a shock when she did die.

Q: It must have been. Did you belong to Girl Scouts?

HEALY: No, we had no Girl Scouts in the neighborhood. I once traveled all the way to my Aunt Bridget's parish, St. Theresa's in Flatbush, to try to join the Girl Scouts, but they said they only took girls from the neighborhood.

Q: Oh, dear.

HEALY: No, there was nothing in the neighborhood. My sister and I did belong for a year or two to something called the Girl Cadets of OLPM, with little uniforms and marching and things like that. But we lost interest.

Q: What were they all about?

HEALY: Just that. Girl Cadets. It was a sort of a girls' group.

Q: Somebody had organized.

HEALY: Somebody had organized it, right. Childhood illnesses, none, thank God. Illness or early death of a sibling, no, thank God.

Early ambitions, expectations of parents. As I say, my parents expected us to be good, expected us to do what we were supposed to do in school. I do not remember any particular push to get A's, but that may have been because we got A's. I think there would

not have been that kind of push. It was a matter of, “Go to school, do what your teacher tells you to do,” and that's it. So as long as there was no complaint from school, they would have accepted A's or B's or probably even C's on the understanding that you were doing your best. I don't recollect any pressures to be anything either. It was a matter of be a good Catholic, be a good student, be a good person, and then life comes,” that's it.

Q: Did any of the nuns inspire you?

HEALY: Oddly enough, no. I had some very good teachers, of course, very good, particularly in high school, because, as I've said, Bishop McDonnell was a diocesan high school and it was therefore staffed, not by one order of nuns as the elementary schools, but by five orders of nuns. We understood there was a good deal of competition for each order of nuns to put their best teachers in Bishop McDonnell, a matter of holding up your order in front of all the other orders. So our feeling was, we did have excellent teachers at Bishop's. I was rather shy, and I don't recollect striking up any particularly close relationship with any of my teachers.

Q: But you had an early interest in history, didn't you?

HEALY: I enjoyed all of my courses in grammar school. I just enjoyed learning. I enjoyed school. In high school, the same thing happened. I enjoyed all the classes. I didn't have to have a major, I just followed the curriculum set out by the school. Those girls who had the best marks in first year Latin formed part of what was called the French group. Out of the three hundred or so students, perhaps forty were selected for the French group, and they were the ones who followed the strictest academic program, which meant you started your second language in sophomore year rather than third year, and it also meant that you took three years math. In my case, it was a choice of a third year of science, chemistry, or a fourth year of Latin. I decided I'd rather have chemistry than a fourth year of Latin.Now let's see, where are we. Up to early ambitions, expectations of parents: As I say, I felt very little pressure from my parents.

Library of Congress

Hobbies. I really had very little in the way of hobbies except reading. It was the most important thing in my life.

Q: You had a library card, did you?

HEALY: Early on, when I was about seven. I don't remember learning how to read. I think I learned from my sister. I have a vivid memory of my sister's first day at school. She came home with a homework lesson to write a page of A's. I can remember my sister writing some A's, and my father writing some A's, and my mother writing some A's, my Uncle Pat writing some A's, and I wrote some A's.

Q: How sweet.

HEALY: So, as far as I can recollect, what my sister learned, I learned almost the same day. But I do recollect at some point finding out that... Somebody had a book, and I remember because we were talking about this, oddly enough, with somebody this weekend. It was a book called “The Chinese Twins.”

Q: Oh, yes, the twin books, weren't they marvelous?

HEALY: I said, “Where did you get this book?” and whoever the child was, the answer was, “The public library.” So I can remember trailing down to the public library and asking to have some books, and they sent me back home to get a gas bill or a light bill showing my address. Back I went to the library and they said, “Can you read?” and I said, “Yes.” I had to go to the children's librarian and read a whole page of instructions about how I had to treat the books, and what the rules were. When I answered all the questions, they gave me a library card and I never looked back. I was down there about three times a week.

Q: You must have been very proud when you got that card.

HEALY: Well, I didn't know enough to be proud or not proud. All I knew was that card was the entr#e to the books, and I loved it. I loved it. In fact, it was so noticeable that my mother, in particular, became concerned, and by the time I got to be about thirteen, she was trying to throw me out of the house in the summertime to do other things than read. But I was perfectly content to spend every spare moment reading. So hobbies, apart from that, there were very few opportunities, really, to develop hobbies in Brooklyn in those days. I swam in the public swimming pool up at Sunset Park and I would roller skate on the street or roller skate with friends at an indoor skating rink. That's about it really, street games, sleigh ride down the street when the snow came, that kind of thing.

Q: What about movies? Did you go to the movies on Saturdays?

HEALY: Oh, regularly. Every child got ten cents for the movie and a penny for candy and we'd go off to the Sunset theater, I guess it was called, for whatever was showing. I rather enjoyed it. We'd see a double feature and cartoons and the Movietone news and I always enjoyed it. That was, by the way, when I decided what two sports I would pursue if I ever had the opportunity: tennis and skiing, because the Movietone news would show, regularly, a few clips on different sports and I decided tennis and skiing were very nice sports. It was years, of course, before I had a chance to do anything about that.

And was very happy to discover that my... When I think of it now, those people in the public library knew exactly what I was doing. I couldn't possibly have fooled them. But when my sister started high school she was entitled to an adult card at the library, and I asked her if I could use it. Of course, my sister said yes. So I then proceeded, brazen-faced, to go down to the public library where I was well-known for six or seven years and pull out this adult card [laughter]. When I think of it now, I think they must have known what I was doing. But, of course, they never said anything and this gave me access to books such as Sherlock Holmes, if you can believe it. I'm sure Sherlock Holmes is in the children's section these days, but it wasn't in those days, it was in the adult section. And access to science fiction books. I discovered a whole new world there. Of course in those

days, a whole new world of adult fiction is not the same thing as a whole new world of adult fiction today.

Q: Oh, no.

HEALY: And I wouldn't be surprised if the public libraries didn't have three sections, a children's section, an adult section, and a dirty books section.

Friendships: I was a fairly shy girl and did not make many friendships. Certainly not in high school. It was only in college that I began forming friendships that have lasted. Although once again, there it was a matter of spending a lot of time working and a lot of time in college and not having the kind of free time that permits the development of deep friendships. But as I say, I do still have a handful of people I see from those days.

Solitary occupations: I guess I've already said it, I read until the books were coming out my ears.

Organizations: There were no organizations in grammar school except the honor society, which didn't count.

Q: The orchestra in high school.

HEALY: The orchestra in high school. I belonged to a service organization called Anthonian Hall for a couple of years there. I went to the blind home up near Bishop Laughlin and helped Daisy and Dora. I'd read to them or write letters for them or run out to the store for them, that kind of thing, once a week. I haven't really put my mind to that kind of thing. Let see, what else did I do in high school? Well, there was the orchestra, there was Anthonian Hall. I guess that was probably about it in high school, because, once again, the minute I turned sixteen I was working, as did most of the girls at Bishop's. And apart from the Glee Club and the orchestra and the dramatic society, I don't recollect any

strong push or pull on the part of organizations, except somehow or another I ended up in this Anthonian Guild Society dedicated to service to the people at the blind home.

Q: Was that through the high school or through your church?

HEALY: Through high school. One of the nuns was interested and I remember she recruited a group of us and I was one of them. As I say, I stayed with it until I found that it was a bit too much for me, once I started working.

Q: Were you in plays?

HEALY: No, no, no, I was much too shy to even consider that. The orchestra, because it took two afternoons a week, took all my spare time.

Q: Of course, yes.

HEALY: Team sports: None in high school. In fact sports were not emphasized in a girls catholic high school in those days. And individual sports: There was not time for anything like that.

Q: Now, were you in high school, no you wouldn't be in high school yet when the war was on, would you?

HEALY: No, I started high school in September '46.

Q: Yes, just at the end.

HEALY: And I was graduated in 1950.

Q: So it didn't make too much of an impact?

HEALY: No, and fortunately, thank God, in my family we've always been the wrong year for the world wars. My father was just 18 when the [first world war ended and he turned 40

just before the second world war. Of course, my generation was too young for the second world war, and Korea would have caught one of my brothers except for the fact that he was... Actually he was born in '34, '44, '54 the Korean war was over before he got out of college. And besides he was overweight, severely, and then developed diabetes as well. Anyway, in college I was much more active, the Blood Bank, the college newspaper. I think I did something on the high school newspaper, contributions, but it was not very much. In college I did, the college newspaper, the college yearbook - I was editor of the college yearbook - the French club, debating - I did debate in my last year or two - the social club. Again, St. John's teacher's college, because it was basically afternoon, evening, and Saturday because most of the students worked more or less full time, there was not a strong emphasis on these extra-curricular activities because nobody had the time.

Q: No, of course not.

HEALY: There was a girls' basketball team, but I wasn't interested in sports. My eyes were bad. I'd started wearing eyeglasses when I was about eight or nine. And there wasn't much time for anything.

Q: Did you work after school?

HEALY: In high school, yes, after school and in summers. Everybody lied about their age. My mother would sign little notes saying I was 18 when I was only 16. Then at St. John's I had a freshman scholarship for the first year, and only worked part time in one of the department stores. But once the freshman scholarship ran out, I transferred from the day college to the afternoon college, the teacher's college, and that was when I started teaching myself. The catholic grammar schools in the New York City area were booming and they needed school teachers. I guess there weren't enough nuns. But many of the college students, the young women at St. John's Teacher's College had jobs teaching at catholic elementary schools. (End of tape)

As I say, I took the foreign service examination September of '54. That was the last time they gave the four-day exam, but those four days happened to coincide with the first four days of the elementary school year.

Q: Oh, boy.

HEALY: So I had not been able to apply for a job as a school teacher until I took the examination, then four days late I started trying to locate a teaching job. Once again, I was fortunate in that my sister, who had graduated a year earlier, had a teaching job at P.S. 11 in Bedford Stuyvesant. About four weeks into the school year, once again, Maureen came home and said, “Miss McNealy needs a school teacher for the third grade.” Maureen was teaching first or second, I think. “If you're interested why don't you go down and talk to her.” So down I went to see Miss McNealy, a very old-fashioned teacher who believed in discipline, and that's how I landed my job teaching at P.S. 11 for that one year before I joined the Foreign Service.The school was an old school. It had been built before President Lincoln visited it. It didn't have corridors, it had sliding doors, so that each room opened into everybody else's room. It was quite an old plant. But it was a good year, because Miss McNealy had been there as a school teacher and principal for something like thirty years. While it was Bedford Stuyvesant and a black neighborhood, Miss McNealy ran that school with an iron hand and the discipline was excellent. And of course, I had had the experience of three years of teaching. So I was not the usual innocent college graduate thrown into her first classroom. I had no trouble with the children, and in fact enjoyed it very much. It was in May of that year, '55, that I came down to Washington for the oral, passed it and started training in September of '55 for the Foreign Service.

That carries us up through what? [Reading] scholastic abilities, subjects enjoyed: I enjoyed everything. History was my best subject, so I majored in it. I still love history.

Influential teachers: In college, Professor Williams was excellent. In fact, all my teachers in the history department were excellent and added to the stimulation of the courses and

confirmed me in my own desires to do something with international affairs or something on that order.

Q: You said that you took a course your second year on diplomatic history and that's when you became interested in the Foreign Service. Did your teacher push that in any way? Or was that strictly your own idea?

HEALY: Not at all. In fact the chapter describing in Foreign Service as a career wasn't even assigned reading. But of course with hours on the subway I frequently would read things not required and I was leafing through he book and came across that chapter, read it, and decided that sounded like an interesting career.

I didn't know much about the Foreign Service. I certainly didn't know anything about the difficulty of getting in. I didn't know anything about the mystique of elitism. I had barely made a connection between Senator McCarthy and this career I'd read about in my text book.

Q: That's true, you missed all that McCarthy stuff.

HEALY: Yes, that was in the early fifties. Extra curricular activities, I've mentioned.

Impact of World War II: The only thing I can say about the impact of World War II was minimal on me because I was so young. But I remember the Korean War because in the early fifties, the male graduates, of course, knew that they'd be swept up in the draft the minute they were graduated and I was very much aware of this. I remember that when I was twenty or twenty-one, no I couldn't have been that old because I was a freshman at St. John's, so I must have been nineteen. And I guess I had to have my mother's permission again, but I went down to the Red Cross to give blood and they wouldn't take me because I didn't have enough iron in my blood. The next time a blood bank came and all of this was my one contribution to feeling that they should be requiring something of me, instead of just of the young men. But finally, when I had another opportunity to give

blood I smartened up and started taking iron pills. From then on I've become a dedicated blood donor, and in fact I'm up to about eight or nine gallons at this stage.

Q: Really?

HEALY: Well, right now they won't take my blood because of the West African experience, except for research. When I discovered through the Foreign Service Journal that the Red Cross was looking for people like me who had been on malaria pills and couldn't donate for regular use, they were looking for people like me for research, I started going back down. In fact I'm going on Thursday to give a pint of blood. I think basically they just use the research blood for testing for shelf life and things like that. They don't want to waste good blood for that. Another year and I'll be able to give blood regularly again.

Military service: Wasn't involved.

Red Cross work: I was involved in both high school and for my first year in college in civil defense. I went down to the local police station when I was about sixteen and offered to do whatever needed doing, so I was sort of a volunteer clerical help at the police station for civil defense.

Q: Any boyfriends go off to the Korean War?

HEALY: No, a boyfriend was drafted, but by this time it was '53, and while Al was drafted, they put him into cook's school which was a total waste of a fine mind. But they finally realized that turning him into a cook was not the thing to do, and they made him something in the education line. But that's as close as the war ever came.

First interest in the Foreign Service, I've mentioned.

Special preparations for the Foreign Service was zero. Mostly because, once again, I did not realize what was involved. I simply read about the career, noticed the advertisement for the exam, took the exam. My first realization of what was involved came during the four

days I was taking the exam, because as we finished one test I'd chit chat in the corridors with the others who were there at the Federal Center on Christopher Street, [and] from the comments of the other students who were a little bit more sophisticated than I - It's not very difficult to be more sophisticated than I. They were coming from Columbia. I remember one young man was there from Harvard - that was when I first understood that I wasn't really expected to pass the written, and they were telling me that there was a cram course in Georgetown in Washington. So I was making alternate plans. I thought I'd teach this year and save my money, take this summer cram course next summer, and take the test a second time, and then if I don't pass it, that would be the end of it. I did pass it the first time, though.

Q: Good for you.

HEALY: I passed the oral.

Q: Was it three days of exam and one of language?

HEALY: Three and a half. It was three and a half days. The half day was not just the language exam. It seems to me there were two exams that morning, but I can't remember.

Q: No, because they kept changing it.

HEALY: This was the exam that had been given since '46. '46 to '54 was the four day, three and a half day exam. Then they shortened it to one day. I'm not quite certain what was involved.

Q: Then you took the oral?

HEALY: Down here in Washington. They only gave the oral in Washington in those days. I came down. I had to take two days off from my teaching job. I told Miss McNealy what it was all about, because the only other way you managed to have a day off from school is to

pretend to be sick. School teachers have got to show up for work. But I told her what was happening, and I came down to Washington, took the oral.

Q: Now, that would be 1955?

HEALY: Yes. May of 1955.

Q: Right in the middle of the Wristonization of the Department?

HEALY: Yes, but I didn't realize that.

Q: I see. They were still giving the exams the same old way?

HEALY: I guess.

Q: Apparently, obviously.

HEALY: There were five men who gave me an oral examination. One of them was Outerbridge Horsey, I remember.

Q: Outerbridge Horsey?

HEALY: He was on my panel. One of them was a man from Commerce whose name was Mr. Rennet. I remember his name only because when they introduced me they had forgotten his name and had to ask him for his name so they could introduce him to me. But I don't remember the other three.

I was told immediately that I'd passed the oral.

Q: Good for you.

HEALY: I was then told to go back home and wait to hear from them. And in fact, they called me up almost immediately and asked me to join a June or July class. I explained

I'd signed up... I was taking graduate credits at Hunter. I told them that I'd signed up for summer school and would prefer to wait until I'd finished my courses, my two courses at summer school. That was why I was asked to report at the end of September of '55.

Q: What were you taking at summer school?

HEALY: I was taking a course in American diplomatic history, again, at the graduate level, and a course in US-European relations, as I recollect. I had taken two other graduate courses in the fall semester. Then I gave myself a spring semester off, and then I took two more graduate courses at Hunter that summer. As I recollect I also had a summer job.

Q: My word, but you were a worker.

HEALY: It was the way we all lived in those days. It was a very nice little job. I worked from two until ten at the Carroll Club, a women's Catholic business women's club on Park Avenue or Madison Avenue. It was in an old mansion. They had a swimming pool in the basement. Rita Sylvester was in charge. I just helped out at the desk, I remember. Maybe it was from two to eight, or two to ten, I've forgotten. Well, anyway, it was a very easy little job and the money was good and it was quite amusing.

Q: Was this when you were going to school, or when you were teaching, or...?

HEALY: That was the summer of '55 when I was going to Hunter for these graduate credits, the two courses. I think I only went two or three mornings during the week, then I had this afternoon and evening job. That brings us up to beginning career.

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Q: Continuation of interview with Ambassador Theresa Healy, July 9, 1985.

We had reached the point where you were just about to embark upon your Foreign Service career. And that would have been in 1955 where you entered State as an O-6 and then when the number of grades was expanded, you became an 0-7.

HEALY: I think that's correct, yes.

Q: What did you do that first year, those first few months?

HEALY: Well, oddly enough, this is almost exactly thirty years ago, and I've spent a few minutes this morning trying to get in touch with some of my former classmates. The Foreign Service Institute had just been, as I recollect, charged with a stronger mandate to train junior officers. I know that when Washington telephoned, initially they wanted me to join the, what they call the August class, I guess it was, which would have been the second class in this new format of training for junior officers, a three-month training. But I couldn't do it because I had signed up already for these graduate courses and I had a job and I said, “I won't be able to, would September or October be all right?” I was told yes, I could join the third junior foreign service officer class which would be formed at the end of September, and, in fact, I reported for duty in Washington.

My family wasn't terribly keen on this business of leaving home. Nobody had ever done it before. I promised to keep in touch very carefully and my mother was placated by the fact that I had signed up to live as a resident in some small Catholic residential hall for young business women near the Capitol. I got out of there after a day or two, because the regulations were really very restrictive. And it was awkwardly placed for the Department of State. I followed the good example of some of my bachelor classmates and I moved up to the old McLean Gardens, where a lot of junior foreign service officers ended up for their temporary time in Washington.We were sworn in on the 28th of September, most of us from that class and we began our training at FSI. I enjoyed it very much. It was then I received my first indoctrination, I guess is the word, in really what the Foreign Service is all about and what foreign service officers are all about. I remember being struck by the

fact that if I looked around the classroom at my colleagues, they did not all seem to be straight out of the Ivy League, Harvard, Princeton, Yale mold from wealthy backgrounds. They looked just about as ordinary as I'm sure I looked and I've kept in touch with them off and on all this time. As I say, almost every year with some exceptions, we manage to get together for dinner toward the end of September. This year we will be celebrating our 30th anniversary.

There were two other young women in the class. Nancy Snyder left after four or five years to take her master's degree and her Ph.D. and she became an academic. Jay Gillespie had a rather unfortunate history. Jay became very caught up in what was then the Algerian struggle for independence from France. After her first assignment in Washington of two years, she informed the department that the only assignment she would take overseas would be to Algeria. The department apparently - all of this is hearsay and third hand - had become aware of the fact that she was getting much too close to local groups, which apparently existed even in Washington, promoting freedom for Algeria and refused to send her to this part of the world. At this point she quit, obtained correspondence credentials from a relative who ran a New England newspaper, went down to Africa, and the next thing I heard, she was jailed by the French, picked up hepatitis and died. Very dramatic story. I really don't know the truth of it because all of this was picked up a bit here and a bit there over the years from people who, I'm sure, didn't know the truth of the whole story either.

The rest of us in the class had the usual sorts of assignments. I remember that about half-way through the first two months we had to fill out a form, and of course we were told it was called the April Fool report, which is part of foreign service tradition, naming places we would like to be assigned to. I just thought let's not invite disaster, and I remember putting down number 1 Europe, number 2 the Far East, and number 3 Latin America, I think. So I thought surely they'll be able to find something for me in that selection. And I was very pleased when I was told I was being assigned to Naples, Italy as a refugee relief officer. I didn't know at all what this meant, but Italy sounded delightful. It was Europe, my first

choice. I didn't think my parents would be as shaken by an assignment to Italy as one to... I remember one of the young men went to a place we had never even heard of, Medellin, Colombia.

Then the last month of the three-month training was devoted to language. This was before the Foreign Service Institute had really geared up its language school to the point where we find it today. I felt myself lucky to get four hours a day for four weeks of Italian. I loved learning the language. I just thought it was great fun. I hadn't realized that, but apparently I do have a talent for learning languages.

Then I did everything that the little instruction sheet said I should do, including arranging to take a ship to Europe, and notified my family that shortly after the New Year, I would be climbing on board a ship going to Italy. I think from what my sister has told me over the years, my parents were really a bit shaken up by all this. In retrospect, I marvel that I, after having never, never, never left Brooklyn in my life, I could face with equanimity this whole idea going off on a ship to Europe.

Q: It's amazing.

HEALY: It amazes me now, but nevertheless, I climbed on board the ship with the whole family in tow and we drank champagne in my tiny, tiny, little four-bunk cabin. That was it, they climbed off the ship and off I went.

Q: What ship were you on?

HEALY: I was on the Constitution.

Q: That went to Naples?

HEALY: It went to Naples via Barcelona and Genoa. There were two other people from my class on the ship with me. One was proceeding on route by car to Palermo and one had been assigned to Naples with me. I enjoyed the ship tremendously. This was my idea of

the foreign service life. Here I was in first class on board a ship crossing the Atlantic and all at somebody else's expense, too.

And I was also very fortunate to have met a young man who had just finished a year taking a master's degree at Brooklyn Polytech, which was a graduate engineering school in Brooklyn, New York. GG had taken his bachelor's degree at the University of Naples and was returning to his family in Naples to eventually take a Ph.D. in what I seem to recollect was aeronautical engineering, but which turns out, from something I read in the paper this past year about him, to involve the Italian space effort, because he was over here for one of the launchings, which involved the Italian government in some way, or the European space agency or whatever. So it was quite amusing to run across his name again. I'm sure there could only be one Dr. Luigi Napolitano from Naples, Italy, involved in something like this.

Anyway, GG did introduce me to his parents and his sisters and through them I came to know a group of young Italians and sopped up Italian just as fast as I could hear it spoken, which was a big help to me.

Q: You had already known French, had you, at university?

HEALY: Oh-ho-ho, I had had high school French and I had had college French, which doesn't teach you to speak two words of it. In fact I had failed when I first took the foreign service exam. the only one of the many tests we took you were allowed to fail was the language test. I failed it. Fortunately during that training period in Washington, I was able to take the French test again and squeak through. So theoretically I was not a language probationer, but I didn't consider that I spoke French. But Italian was my first spoken foreign language.

I enjoyed the work although it seemed rather pointless to me. An Italian clerk went through a refugee's file and certified it for final clearance, turned it over to me. I proceeded to do exactly the same thing and certified it for final clearance. Then Alice Griffith, who headed

up the section, would put her final chalk on it as ready for final clearance. Since I had been a school teacher for four years, I thought this was rather stupid clerical work, but I thought, well, they say in the beginning junior officers have pretty pointless tasks.

After about four or five months, the refugee relief program was winding down. We had dozens of people in Germany, Italy, Greece, I think, still handling war refugees, but refugees from natural disasters, like earthquakes and floods. But we were running down on the legislation that permitted us to bring these people into the United States as refugees.

By the end of that first year, I had been transferred to the main building via a very disagreeable two or three weeks of sorting out dirty old files. That was when I first noticed that the young men got to be special assistants to the consul general and the young women got to clean out the dirty old files. But eventually I was transferred down to the main building and placed in charge of... Well, I was the initial officer who made the initial decision on non-immigrant visas. And the rule, of course, in Naples for non-immigrant visas was, you don't give anyone a visitor's visa unless he happens to be the mayor of the city or somebody else whose bone fides are absolutely unquestionable.

But I enjoyed the work. And there was an exciting time when we had some American refugees from troubles, I guess it would have been in the Suez Canal area, leaving the Middle East via US Army troop ships. A group of us from Naples were flown down to Sicily and boarded the General Patton in the middle of the Straits of Messina in the middle of the night. I thought that was really very exciting. This was what I joined the Foreign Service for. Even if the actual work was simply processing passports and assigning people to hotel rooms, it was still nevertheless, pretty exciting.

By the time I got back from a short weekend in Rome in October, I had learned two things, which came as a bit of a surprise. First of all, we were a losing a number of positions in Naples and I was being transferred to Milan. That didn't trouble me too much, it was still

Italy - One poor young man was transferred from Naples to Venezuela, as I recollect - but that before I could be transferred to Milan, my useful services, my warm body, my useful pair of hands were needed in Vienna because we had the Hungarian revolution and we had refugees pouring out of Hungary into Vienna. So, I just went up to Vienna and spent four weeks up there trying to help many others, pulled in from other places in Europe, deal with this flood of refugees. Got back to Naples in time to spend Christmas in a friend's apartment and then started the drive up to Milan.

Q: You had your own car?

HEALY: Oh, yes. First thing I did when I landed in Naples was buy a Volkswagen, a brand new Volkswagen. I don't think it could have cost more than $500. We had all been trained properly in foreign service procedures. Before we left Washington, we had all borrowed money from the credit union, so I had money to buy my Volkswagen.

I drove up to Milan where I spent the next three years with home leave after one year and a return for two more years. I loved that assignment. I loved the people. Bill Boswell was my first consul general, Charlie Rogers my second, Sam Gammon was there, Parker Wyman. Harold Swope, and, of course, all my Italian friends on the staff of the consulate. When I was over in Milan just two months ago, I had a very happy time speaking to Maria Lousia on the telephone. She's retired and was living in Parma. And having dinner with Laurie... So the ties I developed in Milan are probably the strongest.

The first year I was there I did general consular work, and I enjoyed that very much because it was a bit of everything. It was citizenship, passports, visa work, protection and welfare, which was fascinating. I came in contact with such people as the Princess della Torre e Taxis who wanted to sound out the consul general for ideas on what she should do with her villa up in Bellagio. As it turned out she decided to leave it to the Rockefeller Foundation. J. Paul Getty came in to sign his will and I discovered when he died a few years back that that will was the will that survived all these years. I had to deal with poor

Americans who lost all their money, one poor woman whose mental balance was impaired. It was just great fun. I enjoyed it.

Then I went on home leave, saw my family, and when I left to come back to Italy, I think I was very much in the balance as between do I really want to do this again? Probably if I hadn't enjoyed Milan so much, the risk there was I would have said, “I don't want to do this any more, I want to stay home with the family.” But I loved Milan, so I was able to, with much weeping and wailing, climb on board my first - it wasn't my first airplane, but it was my first long commercial - journey from New York to Boston to Ireland, where I visited my Irish relatives for the very first time ever, to London, and so on back to Milan. That was a very, very enjoyable trip.

I had two more years in Milan, this time as administrative officer, and I very much enjoyed that too. It was just a great deal of fun. I guess I'm leaving out the one month when I was sent down to Genoa, because Genoa needed help in closing out its refugee relief program. Genoa never told Rome or Bill Boswell in Milan that my services were needed to clean out their dirty old files.These were the things that really soured me on the Foreign Service. But then something good would come along, you see. I know I never told Bill Boswell, because I did tell Sam and Mary Gammon, and Sam said, “If Bill Boswell knew that that's why he had to send you down to Genoa for four weeks, he'd have blown his stack.

But at the end of the two years in Milan I asked for a Washington assignment. I thought, “Four years is enough. Now I want to go back home and be able to see the family all the time.” My sister was married before I joined the Foreign Service and by 1960 she had three children and I wanted to see them, and my brother was getting married shortly after I got back from Italy.

So I was assigned to be one of the assistants on the Italian desk in the Bureau of European Affairs. This was a political job, a political assignment in the sense of doing political work, which I was pleased about because I had picked up the mystique in the

Foreign Service about admin work and consular work, and I had learned to conceal the fact that I quite enjoyed doing both those jobs in Milan. But I was pleased to be doing what amounted to political reporting as assistant on the Italian desk. My language was good, my knowledge of Italian political affairs was pretty scanty, despite my years of living there, but I learned a great deal. That's where I met Ed Williams. He was the other assistant.

Well, again we were going through reductions in force and they abolished both the assistant positions on the Italian desk. I remember thinking, “Well, now what?

Q: How long were you in that?

HEALY: Oh, about a year, slightly less. I started working in July of 1960. This would have been about March or April of '61, because President Kennedy, newly in office, had just announced the formation of the Peace Corps, and the circular had come around the Department of State calling for foreign service officers to volunteer for duty with the Peace Corps, helping organize it. I was thinking to myself, “That could be pretty interesting.” and my hand was on the telephone when Galen Stone walked into the office and asked me would I want to be the Swiss desk officer. Well, I thought that sounded fine. I liked the people I was working with very much. I admired the capabilities of the people I worked with. They were all top notch people, Bill Blue, Bob McBride, Sam Lewis, Sam Gammon, Frank Meloy who died, of course, in Lebanon.

Q: Yes, I knew Frank.

HEALY: It was a very nice office. Western European Affairs it was called. So I said, “Yes, I would like to be the Swiss desk officer.” I was the Swiss desk officer for the next year and a half approximately, learning a good bit about Switzerland, becoming fairly involved in the Cuban missile crisis, involved at a very, very low level - I was a spear carrier - but involved because the Swiss represented our interests in Cuba, so whenever a note, a formal note had to go to Cuba, I would hand-carry it up to the Swiss embassy. Believe me, these were the unimportant things. The important stuff was being handled out of the operations center

by the White House, orally, not by sending formal diplomatic notes. That was just a tidying up operation, but it meant I felt involved and I enjoyed it very much.

Then, of course, the question of a foreign assignment came up again and I indicated an interest in going to eastern Europe. I was told that women officers didn't go to eastern Europe in those days. I said, “Secretaries go why don't women officers?” “Well, it's just not done.” But I persisted and I was assigned to Hungarian language training along with another officer, but then we were both canceled out of the language training and I was left high and dry.

Q: Was the other officer a man?

HEALY: He was canceled out as well. The two people we were supposed to replace a year later extended for a year, so there would be no Hungarian language training that year. At that point one of the natural developments occurred that kept me in European affairs for the first fifteen years of my career. The political officer in Switzerland was leaving, would I want to be the political officer in Switzerland? It was a natural result of the work I'd been doing in Washington, and I felt, “Why not.”

Q: That's how you got into political cone work?

HEALY: No, I was doing political work.

Q: It's true, but I mean but you just sort of slid into it from having done consular and admin, you just sort of slid into that, which is so highly prized by all

HEALY: That was being assistant on the Italian desk. The three years in Washington were political work. I was in the political cone. So a political assignment overseas was natural.

Q: Sure. Did they call them cones at that time?

HEALY: I don't know that they did. I think they just said political work, political specialty, something like that. But since I had been doing political work for three years, to go abroad as a political office was a natural result, and to go to Switzerland was again a natural result, particularly because I had been taking French language training, I think in the early morning, and German language training in the early morning. So in January, '64 I arrived in Switzerland for a very, very enjoyable and interesting three years as political officer there. I enjoyed my colleagues, I enjoyed my work very much, I enjoyed my living conditions, I enjoyed Bern very much. I had a wonderful tennis club with very, very warm and friendly people. I still keep up with Beatrice and her brother, Rudy, who were tennis playing partners. Beatrice and I did very well playing interclub for the Sporting Tennis club. I can't think of anything unusual that happened during those three years. I did go home once in the three years but it was not home leave, I had to pay to get myself home.

Q: What were your living arrangements, Terry?

HEALY: I found an apartment. I had bought furniture back in '58, a few sticks. My apartments were undoubtedly very sparsely furnished. A couch, a chair, a table, one of each, kind of thing. But I did have enough furniture to take an unfurnished apartment. I was fortunate that the people who had the apartment before me were, I guess, Italians, and they had an Italian maid who was living in the maid's quarters in the basement of this three-story apartment building. And Elvira agreed to stay on and wanted very much to stay on, and could only stay on if I hired her. Elvira took care of the house for me on a part-time basis and worked elsewhere, I think in a factory. So I was very comfortable there and enjoyed it very much. The tennis was excellent, the skiing was excellent.

Then of course it came time to consider where I would go from there. It was '66 and everybody, it seemed, was concerned about what was going on in Vietnam. I thought a Vietnam assignment would be useful and fascinating and it was the thing to do at the time. I was not in Washington, I didn't thoroughly understand, I think, all the ins and outs, but I did write to the department and say I would be interested in going to Vietnam

on assignment. Back came an answer saying, “We think that Saigon is a good likely possibility, in fact we have a job identified for you via six months in the economic training class, which had just been organized at FSI. I think I was in the third intensive economic training course.

I was very pleased to do this because after three years in Bern, I was beginning to realize just how important economics is. The economic section was twice the size of the political section. The intertwining of those two subjects in Bern is perhaps more common these days than back in the mid-sixties, but I remember thinking to myself, “I would be a more valuable political officer if I knew something about economics.” So when they offered this, I thought, “Fine, I'll learn economics, I'll be at home for six full months and have a chance to see the family a lot before I go off to Saigon.” I just thought this was working out very well indeed. I came back to Washington. The six months intensive economic training was very difficult. I don't think I have a flair for economics. I worked hard at it, though, and did very well in it.

The thing that was most disappointing is that the assignment to Saigon fell through, and fell through, I am convinced, because a woman was not wanted in the job. I have no proof of this, but from comments made to me by an acquaintance, comments which I still remember, to the effect that there are two female officers in Saigon and Saigon thinks it has its quota, it doesn't want another woman. The official reason given, after a very painful interview with some political appointee over at the Executive Office Building, was that I didn't have the economic experience to deal with the job. Well, I thought that was a sham.

Q: A little late in the day to be using that as an excuse.

HEALY: Well, there was a little conversation that went on there between my acquaintance and the man who was going out to head the economic section, to the effect of, “Why didn't you tell me sooner that this assignment had been made? And my acquaintance

responded, “I only found out about it last month when I visited Saigon.” Which also led me to what, I think, was a very sound conclusion that discrimination played a part in that.

I was very hurt. I didn't know what to do, but at this point I'm afraid I decided, “if I'm not going to go to Saigon, I'm not going overseas at all. I want a Washington assignment”. My pride was badly hurt because I thought I could have handled it.

Q: Of course.

HEALY: I was very annoyed that people would think that I had tried to get out of the Saigon assignment through fear or...

Q: Oh, you had that to contend with as well?

HEALY: Well, I don't know. But here I'd been telling everyone I was going to go to Vietnam and all of a sudden I'm not going. The question: “Why is Terry not going to Vietnam.” Answer: “Maybe she's afraid of the danger.” So all in all this was a very unpleasant summer.

Q: I should think so.

HEALY: Lightened by one fact. I was assigned to a job that was very, very useful to me. It doesn't sound glamorous. It was Washington, as I had requested, and it was to INR, a research job on European common market and economic organization affairs. I learned a great deal in that job. I enjoyed working for Anton De Porte who came into the Foreign Service with me but was also my boss at the time. I learned a lot from Anton. It was a very, very useful and valuable assignment. I remember thinking at the time that I couldn't stand it because my previous Washington experience had been in one of the geographic bureaus where the phones were ringing all the time and somebody was calling up, and in INR it's a cloister. Perhaps not so much now, but in those days it was. So when RPE, which is the European action counterpart to the research work that I was doing, suggested

I come down to the Bureau of European Affairs and work in the action office, I was very happy to do so. I spent three very happy years there, doing more or less the same work, except in the action side rather than the research side.So I had five years in Washington that I enjoyed very much indeed. I had a chance to come to know something about the department, to learn something about issues such as unionization, and whether AFSA should become a union. I never got involved for some reason, possibly because I was so taken up with the unionization issue, I never got involved in the women's discrimination issue, which was becoming public knowledge in '69.

Q: Yes. Yes, indeed.

HEALY: I was in Washington from '67 to '72, and yet my only involvement in those issues... It must have been peripheral if it existed at all. I would read about the Allison Palmer case in the newspaper, but somehow or other, my spare time energies were devoted to tennis, to skiing, and to turning the Foreign Service Association into a union. But those were very happy years in Washington, as well.

Q: Now how did you feel about your promotion schedule, so to speak? Did you feel you were going up as well as you should, better than you should, or about the way you should?

HEALY: It's very hard for me to judge that. I tended to be younger than others.

Q: Yes.

HEALY: I think I was the youngest one in my foreign service class. I've always been fairly modest about deserving recognition quote unquote. I just felt, “Well, do a good job and if you deserve a promotion, a promotion will come.”

Q: Yes.

HEALY: And by and large, they came at a point when I was not yet becoming concerned about why I wasn't being promoted. So I can't remember being particularly concerned about the promotion schedule.

Q: Do you think you sort of distanced yourself from the intense competitiveness that exists between male officers? Especially in the political and economic cones?

HEALY: I can't understand the question, Ann. What do you mean, distanced myself?

Q: Just didn't put yourself in direct competition with them in your own mind?

HEALY: No, I don't see how that could be so. I knew who I was competing with. Everybody else in my class in the Foreign Service.

Q: But you didn't dwell on it, is what I mean?

HEALY: No.

Q: Men tend to discuss it so often, in my experience. They talk about who's getting ahead and why did so and so get promoted and this sort of thing. You didn't wish to participate in that sort of thing?

HEALY: I didn't get much involved in that kind of thing, except when the promotion list would come out. I'd be part of the usual group going over the list and I'd hear somebody saying, “Well there's good old Joe Blow, he really deserves it.” Or, “For god's sake, there's a loser if I ever saw one.” So I knew this kind of thing went on, and in groups where conversations like that took place, I participated but...

Q: But you didn't waste a lot of your time or stay up at night worrying about it?

HEALY: No.

Q: No.

HEALY: I just figured if somebody got a promotion sooner than I did when I thought that perhaps we were on a par, I would say, “Well he did a better job, he had a better efficiency report, or there was some other type... But putting it this way, I rather naively believed that the system worked properly.

Q: I want to ask you a question that was suggested to me by one of your colleagues, a woman who has had a career, a very...

HEALY: I'm just going to get a cup of coffee, you go on and ask.

Q: A very successful career. She says that when she came into the service she never expected to rise to a very high position. She never could conceive of herself as being the boss of a man. Now did you ever have that feeling, that is to say, that the expectation of sex roles in America at the time you came in were such that you never saw yourself as rising very far?

HEALY: I didn't think about it, quite frankly. Remember, I had been in an all-girls high school. I had been a schoolteacher. I had seen school principals who were women, bossing men school teachers. It just never occurred to me. I think I tend to take things one day at a time. I have the general outlines of the future pretty fairly in mind, but I don't agonize from one day to the next about when is the promotion list coming out? Will I be on it? Will I not be on it? Will Joe Blow be on it when I think Joe Blow is a nincompoop? I don't worry about those things and I do not recollect ever really worrying about bossing a man, because for one thing, my first boss in the Foreign Service was a woman and she was bossing men.

Q: Was it?

HEALY: Yes. Alice Griffith. So I saw it happening in the Foreign Service. I assumed that the day would come when I would be bossing other people, and I never thought of whether those other people would be men or women. I also knew that at no point had I made any permanent commitment to the Foreign Service because I knew at the time that if I elected to get married I would have to resign.

Q: Yes.

HEALY: So it was a question of just going on from assignment to assignment, taking things as they come, sticking with the Foreign Service until something else offered, when I would have to make a decision.

Q: I see.

HEALY: The only one time I was tempted, the decision was made in favor of the Foreign Service.

Q: This brings us now to 1972, at which time you were assigned to Brussels.

HEALY: Indeed. This was probably the wrong assignment for me. It was 1972, so that means what? Sixteen years of European experience. I had tried now and again to get out of EUR. I knew I needed experience in another geographic area, but I was persuaded by the same logic that sent me from the Swiss desk to Switzerland, to accept an assignment in Brussels. I shouldn't have done it, but everybody said, “Brussels is a wonderful city in which to be living and you know the work already.” So when a job as political officer came open in Brussels, friends who worked with me in RPE said, “Go ahead Terry take it. You know you can do it, and you'll be in Brussels.” So I took the easy way out. I should have been smarter career-wise. I should have been counting the pennies and the dollars and whatever and I should have avoided that assignment, but I took it.

And it was the wrong job. I was overqualified for the job. I was too senior for it. I discovered after the fact that the personnel officer, who realized this when I didn't, almost blocked the assignment, but didn't. [laughs] “Oh, what might have been, what might have been. Anyway. I didn't quite enjoy the work. I couldn't find a comfortable tennis situation, which always makes me a more agreeable person in the office. I just found that things weren't working out too well.

After a year I took myself back home for a family visit and came down to Washington, talked to some people and said, “Look, it's not working out too well. If there's a direct assignment that I'm qualified for, or whatever, I would like to get out of Brussels.” Now what happened is that immediately, in fact I may have already done that before I got to Washington after the year, I'd already shortened the tour from three years to two-years. I knew I could not take three years in this job, so it was now a two year assignment. I was half way through it. And fortunately that was when the Geneva negotiations of OSC[Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] started.

The first Helsinki agreement in general was now going to be hammered into a concrete document in Geneva. I was assigned to work on the economic basket in Geneva. I enjoyed the work very much. I was working with George Vest, who's now the Director General [of the Foreign Service]. I was working with a bunch of people I liked and could learn from. It was an exposure to international organization work which had been always something interesting to me. I enjoyed living in Geneva. Unfortunately Brussels hadn't counted on losing me for that length of time.

At a certain point I received a phone call from Brussels which in effect said, “Terry, come back or don't bother coming back at all.” [laughter] In other words, we've got to fill your position. Now either you come back to fill it, or just cut the ties and throw your lot in with the people in Geneva, and we'll find somebody else to fill the position. Well, I talked this over at length with some friends in Geneva and they all persuaded me, they were wrong

in the end, but they did persuade me that the CSCE negotiations were very delicate and subject to termination, cancellation, suspension at almost any point.

Q: Yes.

HEALY: And that I could throw my hand in with the negotiations and find myself without a job. So reluctantly I went back to Brussels, and was fortunately much heartened within a matter of a couple of months by the knowledge that I had been selected for senior training, and would be going to the National War College. So I hung on for another six months in Brussels and came back to Washington for that training.

Q: Now when you received the notice that you were to have that training, did you then begin to look ahead and think this might mean reaching the top of the heap?

HEALY: What is the top of the heap?

Q: Well, in the sense of being an ambassador, I should say.

HEALY: The thought crossed my mind that I might be fortunate, yes, but I also realized there were too many imponderables.

Q: Of course.

HEALY: To my advantage was my political and economic background and the fact that I was a woman. Somewhat to my disadvantage is that I was not well-known to senior levels in the department, not at all. I had never developed that kind of a relationship of working for a very powerful and important figure who in rising to the top is able to bring with him the people he has relied on for excellent work in the past. I'd never really had that relationship with anyone who was moving up. The year at the War College I would not have traded for anything. It was the best year the Foreign Service ever gave me. I enjoyed it; I thrived.

It was just a very stimulating year and I've already mentioned that at the end of it, I was assigned to the Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service.

Q: Yes, but getting back to the War College, you write a paper, don't you, for the War College, and you take a trip to the...

HEALY: You write a number of papers and there is domestic travel involved, but basically the major travel was a three-week trip overseas toward the end of the year. I elected to go to the Far East because I'd never been to that part of the world.

Q: You can go where you wish?

HEALY: You could sign up. Now if everybody signed up to go to the Far East then there would be some shuffling of people who would end up going where they didn't want to go, but I was fortunate and I was in the Far East in fact in the spring of '75 when Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese. It was a fascinating three weeks. But as I say, the whole year was enormously stimulating. We had very, very highly qualified people on the faculty. They brought in speakers who were outstanding.

Q: How many were in your class?

HEALY: Oh, I don't know. I do know that about 160 constitute a class over at the National War College today and I imagine it was about that, 160.

Q: How many foreign service officers?

HEALY: Oh, probably about fifteen. Ten to fifteen. It's mostly military, of course, army, navy, air force.

Q: So it is considered quite a cachet, isn't it, to be selected for the War College?

HEALY: Selection for senior training is... The military have a phrase called “punching the ticket.” It is punching the ticket for foreign service officers. It doesn't necessarily mean that the best people go to senior training. Sometimes the best people actively avoid any senior training at all, because they feel it will block their rather rapid rise to the top. They don't want to waste a year.

Q: It pulls them out of the mainstream.

HEALY: And they don't want to waste the year. So you will find that of the people at the top, some have had senior training and some have not had senior training, through their own desires. But I wouldn't have given up that year for anything.

Q: You then went to the Board of Examiners?

HEALY: Right.

Q: And you were the senior examiner for the economic cone.

HEALY: Right. It was a job, as I say, that I did not want. I actually went to the deputy assistant secretary for personnel to protest that I did not want to do this administrative job.

Q: Because you thought it would be monotonous work?

HEALY: I just didn't think it was the kind of job that would lead toward further advancement in the Foreign Service. It was off on the sidelines. It was doing administrative work, personnel work. I was not a personnel specialist. I was looking at the jobs that others of my colleagues from the Foreign Service were assigned to, coming out of the National War College, and I was unhappy with my assignment.

Q: Yes.

HEALY: But I'm afraid that... I think I'm probably... Once I've made my protest I generally tend to obey orders. So of course I ended up going to the Board of Examiners, and I never regretted it because it was a very, very stimulating year working with very, very good people, one of my best bosses in the Foreign Service. It was a fine year. But it was still not a year that I would have chosen myself.

Q: No. Then I believe you said that Carol Laise, being the director general, had some influence on your next assignment?

HEALY: I don't recollect that Carol asked me personally, or whether it came through the head of my office, but it was indicated to me that Ambassador Laise would like to have me working on her policy planning staff in her own office.

Q: Did you work on the revision of the foreign service law?

HEALY: No. No, that happened after I had gone to New Zealand. During the one year I was in her office, Shaw Smith, head of the office... We all more or less did what Carol Laise asked us to do. I was doing handicapped questions, spouses questions, and then once the Carter administration was in place, I had to drop just about everything to deal with the Carter administration's desire to increase the number of women and minorities coming into the Department of State.

Q: I see. Could you tell us a little more about this handicapped and spouses issues? What were they at this time?

HEALY: Well, I remember that they were both very, very active at the same time to the point that I had to go to Shaw and say I couldn't handle both. They were too delicate, too sensitive, too complex. And I remember saying, “Shaw, I'm going to drop the ball on one or the other and the noise will be heard throughout this building.” But for the period when I was dealing with both, with spouses issues it had to do with investigating such questions as right to work at an overseas post. Could we by obtaining the right to work in

Washington for, let's say, the spouses of the New Zealand embassy, could we win for our own spouses in New Zealand the right to work there?

Q: I see.

HEALY: That's one minor part of the whole issue. Paying wives to do representation. Recognizing the work that spouses do in supporting the officer in his work or her work. In any event it was a whole bundle of issues, questions were always being raised and there was no previous pattern or guidance to follow. It was all brand new territory. We were all stumbling around.

And handicapped the same thing. We had questions as to whether a blind applicant could take the foreign service written examination, and if so, should he or she be given extra time and a reader? Under what conditions? How do they take the oral examination? What if you're a paraplegic? All these questions.

Q: This was all a spin-off of the civil rights act?

HEALY: I think it had been growing over years. I think it had been growing over years. Remember that the declaration of independence for spouses came in 1971, so the spouses themselves had been talking about these issues and fermenting new ideas and it was beginning to come to a head. It may well be that the Carter administration sort of gave everybody a feeling that well, now was the time when we might make, we might make some real progress. So all these issues were bubbling and every time you turned around there was a new issue.

Q: Was the American Foreign Service Wives Association very active in this?

HEALY: I think they were, but I also recollect that it wasn't the senior wives, it was more junior wives who were more actively raising these issues. Tandem assignments, what

happens when the wife takes and passes the foreign service exam and you've got two people on your hands that have to be assigned? There were new issues every day.

Q: And by now women were permitted to retain their jobs or be reinstated if they married.

HEALY: Certainly. They were invited to be reinstated back in '70 or '71.

Q: Was it that early? I didn't realize that.

HEALY: So that was a very exciting year, I must say.

Q: After that, then you got to...

HEALY: New Zealand. Ambassador Laise felt very strongly that I should go out as a DCM, but of course she faced, as did I, the fact that very few men, for many reasons, would feel comfortable with the idea of a deputy, an alter ego, who is a woman. Not to speak about what their wives might say about that. I knew or I found out, after the fact perhaps, that Ambassador Selden, who'd already been three years in New Zealand, had been through that summer and had interviewed a number of people for the job, and had not apparently been terribly persuaded to offer the job to anyone. So it is entirely thanks - and the previous comments I made about not having any mentors, if I had one, Carol Laise was one, because it was only through her action that I was recommended to Ambassador Selden and that Ambassador Selden accepted me sight unseen.

Q: That is certainly a compliment to you.

HEALY: I think it's a great credit to him. I think it's a great credit to him and a great credit to his wife as well.

Q: Do you think there's more problems with the wives in situations like that?

HEALY: I haven't the faintest idea, but I was lucky. I'm quite sure that a wife [might] say to her ambassador husband, “Dear, I really don't like the idea of your working that closely, day after day, with a woman. Find yourself a nice young man.” I'm quite sure that is a possible reaction on the part of some women.

Q: Of course.

HEALY: But it didn't happen in my case, and I was always very grateful to Carol Laise and to the Seldens.

Q: Did you enjoy New Zealand?

HEALY: Very much. It's very far away. Oh, very far away. But I enjoyed the country very much. I made some friends there. There was tennis. There was even a bit of skiing. I enjoyed the work very much indeed. Ambassador Selden was a good ambassador to work for. Perhaps it's just that we were compatible types, but I have heard stories of DCMs who said they never had a chance to do anything because the ambassador did everything. On the other hand, I've heard of DCMs who said that they spent half their time trying to prevent the ambassador from doing dumb things. None of that ever happened to me. So it was a very easy working relationship and one that I enjoyed very much. I learned a great deal from him. Ambassador Selden is a non-career ambassador, but he'd been in congress for many years and he had been by the time I came he'd already been ambassador three years. So I knew I had a lot to learn from him. He was five years there all told.

Q: Was he really? Did you have a very heavy schedule of social things you had to go to?

HEALY: Not as much as I would in a European assignment, perhaps. But enough, because you had the Commonwealth connection, you had lots of visitors from Britain,

you had visiting royalty, if you can believe it. Ambassador and Mrs. Selden were active socially.

I was very fortunate though, enormously, enormously fortunate. Ambassador Selden called me in shortly after my arrival to explain that he had found it necessary to make other arrangements at the official residence. The Swiss couple who had been working there, the man had reached the age of retirement and both had elected to retire at the same time, so he had made other arrangements. I've forgotten what they were. I think it involved somebody from Malaysia or Hong Kong or Singapore or something. Very, very good arrangements but of course he also had his wife, who was terrific. She worked very hard in that house. But what he was saying to me was that while the man, who had previously served at the residence, was retired, he was considerably older than his wife. Why didn't I take on the wife as my housekeeper part-time? I had a very easy three years. Oh, it was a wonderful, wonderful opportunity. So Maria [was my] housekeeper for three years and did everything. I'd simply say, “Maria, I have to give a dinner party for twelve next Thursday. Are you free?” Because she was doing catering and I had to be sure that she was free to take care of my things. She would say, “Yes.” I would say, “Fine, would you lay it on? She would lay on the waiters, buy the food, offer me the menu, do everything.

Q: Marvelous.

HEALY: Oh, was I lucky!

Q: One of those jewels that you always hope you will find.

HEALY: I couldn't believe it. In all aspects I had a very, very enjoyable and successful and happy three years in New Zealand.

Q: That's wonderful. The last six [months] of it I believe were under Ambassador Martindell?

HEALY: Almost the last year. I think of it as two years with Ambassador Selden and one year with Ambassador Martindell. But she was a bit late getting there. There was a gap, I think, maybe of a couple of months. Then she was away, I think, for a month at Christmas time. So all I guess in all we weren't together a year, a calendar year, yes, but with gaps in there.

Q: I understand.

HEALY: That was also a very, very happy association. Ambassador Martindell had never been - of course she'd never been an ambassador before. So things were quite new to her and yet our relationship was comfortable enough that I felt that I could offer her advice at any time. And that worked out very happily as well. I think she stayed on for another two years. No, let's see, I guess she would have left... Well, since she was a Carter appointee, I guess she would have left when the Reagan administration came in. But I'm not positive about that. I think she may have stayed on maybe another six months past the changeover and left in the summer of '81.

Q: I see.

HEALY: I think. I'm not really positive.

Q: It must have been very interesting to you to see the difference in styles between two different people, one very experienced and one who was new to the job.

HEALY: But it's inevitable because there is no such thing as a single way for an ambassador to operate. It will be different from one person to the next, inevitably and always. So when people talk about an ambassador who did this or an ambassador who had a habit of doing this, you're basically speaking about individuals. There may be no way you can sort of synthesize a list of ambassadorial traits or characters. I think it's been tried. I think I've seen such lists, but it's very hard to do because everything depends upon the personal predilections of the individual, the background he or she brings to it, the

interactions within the office, the demands of the job, the culture in which you're operating. You can go on forever as to why each ambassador is unique.

Q: Exactly, yes. But all of this must have been wonderful training for you, because you're next assignment was to be an ambassador yourself.

HEALY: This is the classic example. This is the way it's supposed to happen, that as DCM you learn how to be an ambassador and then you get to be an ambassador. It doesn't always happen that a DCM ends up as an ambassador.

Q: No, I know.

HEALY: It was a surprise to me. It was nothing I'd asked for, nothing I expected at that point. It happened.

Q: Have you any idea who put your name up?

HEALY: By that time Ambassador Laise had retired. I had really no idea. The senior training officer in PER called me up out of the clear blue sky. We had already been discussing possible onward assignments, possibly DCM somewhere else, political counselor at a large post, perhaps even Washington. I remember telling him that I always enjoy going back to Washington after a foreign assignment. But he called me up out of the clear blue sky and said, “Terry, if you were to be assigned as ambassador to Freetown, if you were to be offered that position, ambassador to Freetown, would you accept?” Well, I had never been to Africa at the time. I was pretty certain Freetown was the capital of Sierra Leone, but I was not certain enough to say it over the telephone, I mean, reveal my ignorance. So the first thing I said was, “Why do you ask, Bob?” He said, “We've had a couple of instances where an offer was made and the person turned it down, and it's pretty embarrassing for the department and the system and the White House to have somebody refuse.” So I said, “Rest assured, Bob, I will not refuse. If I am offered the ambassadorship to Freetown, I will accept.” Then of course he proceeded to say, “Don't

count on it, Terry, there are four or five others on the list. It's a very dicey thing. I just have to ask the question and just don't count on it." I said, "Don't worry, Bob, I'm not buying ambassadorial stationery," or something to that effect. But he called back in about a month and said that's it. You're going to be the next ambassador to Freetown.

Q: Now this was still under President Carter?

HEALY: Yes. It would have been the January-February-March time frame of 1980.

Q: 1980, I see. So how early did you leave New Zealand to come back and ready yourself?

HEALY: I was reading all the books I could lay my hands on. Not much, because I was also under the obligation to reveal to nobody what my next assignment was. You can hardly go around asking people if they have any books on Sierra Leone if it's supposed to be a secret where you're going. So I had to be cautious, and I was. I left, I think, sometime around June to get back to Washington and start briefing myself on Sierra Leone, and I had a couple of months in Washington, plus leave of course. I had perhaps three weeks leave and then three or four weeks in Washington for briefings, to attend the ambassadorial conference, for the hearing on the Hill, and then the swearing in. And all of this was marred by my brother's unexpected death that same summer.

Q: Were your mother and father still alive at this point?

HEALY: My father died in '71 and my mother is senile, so she didn't understand.

Q: How tragic.

HEALY: That was too bad. But my sister and her family and my brother and his family came down from New York for the swearing-in. We had two or three other guests. I did not

really invite anyone to attend the swearing-in except two or three of my oldest friends and Anton De Porte, and there was, of course, no party.

Q: Was this on the eighth floor of the State Department?

HEALY: It was in David Newsom's office. I'd asked Roz Ridgeway to swear me in. Roz is an old friend. I think at that point she was counselor at the department. But for some reason Roz couldn't. I think she was out of town. She asked Dave Newsom, who was then the undersecretary for political affairs, to swear me in. And while Dave Newsom doesn't know me, hardly at all, he very kindly performed the ceremony and that was it, since we were making it very quiet and very informal. Then I went up to New York with my family that same day, spent another few days with them and took off for Sierra Leone.

Q: Why was your choice to have a very small ceremony?

HEALY: Because of my brother's death.

Q: Oh, I'm sorry, of course, naturally. Stupid of me. Can you remember any anecdotes about your appearance before the Senate?

HEALY: Not really. As happens in the summertime, the Senate was behind in its work and pushing toward what I guess would have been the Labor Day recess and they had a backup of ambassadorial appointments. Three of us - was it three of us or was it five of us - were going to Africa, and rather than have us appear individually one by one in front of the committee, we appeared as a group.

Q: They did you in batches?

HEALY: They did us in batches. [laughter] I don't know if it was a first or what. The senators were asking the usual questions and we were providing rather standard answers, because it was basically pro forma. We were career people, we were going to small

African countries. There was no controversy involved with those countries or with us as individuals. So I would say that the hearing lasted about fifteen minutes.

Q: Oh, is that all? Did you happen to be the only woman in that particular group?

HEALY: I think I was. I'm not absolutely positive. I think I was the only one, but I am not positive. I remember there was somebody. Barbara Watson was going out to Malaysia, but she wouldn't have been in that group of three or five of us.

Q: Of African ambassadors?

HEALY: Of African ambassadors. But there may have been, there's something nagging at my mind but I can't remember.

Q: Frances Cook.

HEALY: Frances Cook. When did she [go out]?

Q: She went in June of 1980.

HEALY: Then no, she would have not been appearing with me in August before a Senate committee.

Q: That's it, so I think you must have been the only one.

HEALY: Perhaps there were only three of us. Yes, two men and me.

Q: Two men and you. When you were at the War College, were you the only woman from the State Department in that particular class?

HEALY: Yes. There was only one other women among the student body. She was an Army colonel.

Q: I see.

HEALY: She and I were the two women in the student body. Today that has changed, of course, there are more women, but let's face it, there are not too many people with the proper experience and age, which would have meant that they would have started their careers twenty-five years ago, twenty years ago. There's not a large pool to draw from.

Q: That is exactly it. It will take years before...

HEALY: Well, we've already got a good ten-year backlog already. Ten years from now we'll have plenty of women to draw from in the way of a pool for something like senior training. I think, I hope, I may be wrong. I have not looked at the figures.

Q: What sort of preparing did you do? You said that you read and briefed yourself. Did you talk to the diplomatic group from Sierra Leone here?

HEALY: I paid a courtesy call on the ambassador. You don't really expect them to brief you on what's going on.

Q: No, no. Mostly through reading?

HEALY: Through reading and talking to people on the desk. Talking to AID officers who had served in Sierra Leone, talking to Peace Corps people who had served in Sierra Leone, USIA, talking to the intelligence agencies, to Defense. When you really start digging around for information in this town, you can find it in a lot of different places. Then I went up to New York for two or three days to talk to businesses and banks.

Q: What was the situation between the United States and Sierra Leone at that time? How were the relationships?

HEALY: The relationship was normal. It was fine. Sierra Leone is a small country which looks to the United States for the little bit of aid we feel we can spare for a country that has

no enormous importance for our national interests. The relationship is a calm and peaceful one.

Q: No particular problems of AID?

HEALY: No, my only concern was that because there were no problems, because there was no high visibility of national interest, I was a little bit afraid that if anyone wanted to cut budgets, cut AID programs, cut Peace Corps programs, Sierra Leone, along with about twenty-five other African countries, would be logical candidates for the list of cuts.

Q: I see. How did the host country react to having a woman?

HEALY: I don't think they care. They had a woman mayor. They have women in their own diplomatic corps. I forget whether I was the first woman ambassador to serve there. I have no recollection that I was, so I presume there have been other women ambassadors there. There is still a little bit of the cultural signs of a male society. The dinner club was the primary social club in town, dinners once a month, I think, for the political and economic elite of Freetown. That was exclusively male. And, in fact, since the American ambassador had always been a member there was an actual vote taken - well, I can't say that because I don't know that an actual vote was taken - but I was definitely considered for a membership and the decision was made to stick with the all-male membership with which they were familiar.

Q: Can you remember your arrival at the post?

HEALY: Oh, yes.

Q: Who met you?

HEALY: The traditional meeters and greeters, the DCM, my secretary. I believe the AID director. The USIA director was there and somebody from the office of protocol, of course.

Q: Yes.

HEALY: We landed at the Freetown airport. I guess I was on French Air and thanks to some of the economies of Washington, I was in second class.

Q: You don't mean it?

HEALY: I certainly do mean it.

Q: But I thought ambassadors always went first class.

HEALY: At some point in the Carter administration the decision was made that the president's personal representatives would travel tourist. The announcement came over the loudspeaker, “Would the American ambassador please identify himself.” When I pressed the button and called for the flight attendant, I could hear the whispers. Number one, I was a woman, and number two, I wasn't in first class where they expected to find me [laughter] and hadn't been able to find me. They'd asked, I think, every first class passenger.

Q: And why did they want you?

HEALY: To take me off the plane first because protocol was waiting for me.

Q: What happens when you arrive at a post and you're going to be the ambassador? You're met by a group?

HEALY: Your own people, your senior people from the embassy will be there to greet you, along with either the chief of protocol or his representative. You are a non-person until you present your credentials. I was able to function inside the office and inside my own home, but I was not permitted to call on anyone or take up official public duties until after the presentation of credentials. Since President Stevens was about to pay an informal visit to Washington, protocol hurried up the presentation of credentials ceremony. I got

there on the eighth of September, I think, and presented credentials on the eighteenth, ten days later. Once I had presented credentials I was officially recognized and could start paying courtesy calls on my ambassadorial colleagues, government ministers. I could start entertaining. I could attend functions. The key point comes with the presentation of credentials.

Q: And can you describe that ceremony?

HEALY: It's a very formal one. The president sent his own limousine for me, flying the American flag, and, I think perhaps the Sierra Leone flag. It was an open car. The chief of protocol was in the car. My DCM was in the car as well. Then there [were] a couple of others from the embassy who traveled separately, but in this particular car there was the chief of protocol and me and then my DCM. We drove with motorcycle escort to State House, where I was escorted to a waiting room, and after a few minutes wait, escorted in to the reception room, the formal reception room of President Stevens. There the ceremony is also cut and dried since we had exchanged remarks ahead of time. I believe I spoke first and then presented my letters of credence to him, then he replied and then they brought out the champagne. We toasted each other and we sat and chatted for three or five minutes. Then he rose to indicate that I could leave. I took my leave of him and back we drove. Oh, this time with the flag flying. That's right, the American flag was not flying on the limousine when I was brought into town. Then we just drove back home where I offered the chief of protocol again the obligatory glass of champagne and that was it.

Q: Did you wear any special clothing for this?

HEALY: No, I think I wore the same dress I wore for my swearing-in, and no gloves and no hat. Sierra Leone, thank god, is an informal country. I don't recollect, I might have carried a pair of gloves. I certainly wasn't wearing them. And I was not wearing a hat.

Q: Just an ordinary afternoon dress, you wore?

HEALY: Something a bit better than a dress you'd wear to the office, the dress that I wore to my swearing-in. I thought if it was appropriate for one, it's appropriate for the other.

Q: Of course. And the president, did he wear a business suit?

HEALY: As I recollect, he wore a business suit.

Q: Now, what about your own DCM? He was there when you arrived?

HEALY: He was there when I arrived. He had been there over a year, I think. That would have been September of '80, September of '81... Yes, he had been there for a year and as his second year was coming to an end, he asked if he could extend for a third year and I agreed that he could stay on for a third year. So Dick had three years in Sierra Leone.

Q: Had you known him before?

HEALY: No.

Q: Could you describe the size and makeup of the mission?

HEALY: The staff of the embassy was quite small, of course. When it comes to Department of State people, counting myself and the DCM, the American secretary, the consular officer, and communicators, we couldn't have been more than seven or eight at most. USIA had one officer and frequently had a short term junior officer trainee. AID had three officers and a secretary. Peace Corps had perhaps four staff members living in Freetown and directing the efforts of two hundred volunteers upcountry. We had what you can call the odd bod floating around, semi attached to the embassy such as the AFL-CIO labor advisor, but that was about it.

Q: Were you able to develop a close relationship with the head of state?

HEALY: I never tried to develop a close relationship with the head of state. I think it would be inappropriate. Relations between an ambassador and head of state, I think, are best characterized by formality, openness, but no attempt to be buddy-buddy, except in very, very unusual circumstances, which have existed, I'm sure, in the past in certain posts in the world.

Q: What host government officials did you see the most of carrying out your duties?

HEALY: It depended upon the particular issue that was on the fire at the moment. I might be calling on somebody in Treasury or the Development Bank, or I might be talking to one of the UN people about financial affairs. It depends on the issue. But after your initial courtesy calls and some effort at developing contacts, you should know somebody anywhere to whom you can turn for the information you need, or to make the points you feel have to be made.

Q: Do you develop a social relationship with these people, or their wives?

HEALY: Oh, yes. Well, it's a bit harder with the wives because the wives have their own social circles which exist when everybody else is in the office. But yes, certainly in the evening affairs I organized, I would attempt to establish a more friendly relationship with a particular minister or deputy minister and his wife. But again, given the fact that you are the official representative of one country and they are official representatives of another, you realize that in most instances your relationship will have to remain formal.

Q: What about colleagues from other embassies?

HEALY: You certainly, of course, develop official relations and friendly relations with the other members of the diplomatic corps, and since there the relationship does not tend to be quite so formal, you're more inclined to develop personal friends, or people with whom you are inclined to do such personal things as play a friendly game of tennis.

Q: Yes, it's by personalities, I suppose?

HEALY: It's not so much by personalities, there is always that, but it's just a little bit easier to suggest a game of tennis to the British High Commissioner than it is to suggest a game of tennis to the foreign secretary, the foreign minister. If he were a great tennis player and I very much wanted to play tennis with him, I would suggest it. But that didn't happen.

Q: Did China or the Soviet Union or Cuba have missions there?

HEALY: There was a Chinese ambassador, a Cuban ambassador, and a Soviet Union ambassador, yes.

Q: Were you invited to things that they were at? Did it create any problems for you?

HEALY: The North Korean ambassador and I just did not even acknowledge each other's existence. The Cuban ambassador was the dean of the diplomatic corps so there was some inevitable, as I recollect, there was some inevitable formality of acknowledging. (End of tape)

-strike, a general strike and reputed involvement of an American labor advisor, which came to nothing in the end.

Q: What was your relationship with the local press? Did they report on your activities?

HEALY: Not really. This is a very, very small town in a very small country. These papers are struggling to find the paper and the ink to print an issue once a week. They're not going to waste time on what the American ambassador is doing. The reporting was more inclined to focus on what the government was doing that would effect the lives of the people of the country. There was no such thing as a gossip column, really, no. It was very basic newspaper reporting.

Q: What about US press? Did any reporters come to visit Sierra Leone while you were there?

HEALY: I think there was some journalists who came through in January of '81 as part of the annual OAU meeting which took place in Sierra Leone that year. But other than that there would be nothing that would bring an American journalist to Sierra Leone.

Q: I see. Were consular matters a major problem at your post?

HEALY: Not really, because there were so few American visitors. We had one American prisoner who was in jail for a good year or so, and I took considerable interest in his case because he was in fact the only one. But eventually he was released and I think stayed on in the country. Visa problems sometimes did arise. Problems with students wanting to study in the United States. Some small handful of citizenship problems, but it was not a very active consular post.

Q: Could you describe the AID function at your mission?

HEALY: Well, it was a very small AID program, three to six million dollars, much of it Food for Peace, PL 480. It was basically... Much of the money was concentrated in what we call the Acre program which was an agricultural research and extension program designed to increase the agriculture output of the small farmer in the country.

Q: I see.

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Today is September 13, 1985.

Did foreign service inspectors come while you were at the mission?

HEALY: We did have an inspection while I was at the mission. I believe it was sometime in the early summer of '82. I'm not absolutely certain about that, it might have been '81.

Q: How did they treat your mission?

HEALY: There were no problems, as I recall. They were basically looking at a number of things, as they always do, reporting, economic and political reporting, consular work, and administration, particularly auditing, checking contracts to be sure they were properly done. We had a problem with a dishonest employee which was of interest to them. They checked into that fairly carefully. They checked into whether or not we would be able to prosecute him in a court of law. But for the inspectors, Sierra Leone was, as I recollect, a two or three day inspection, perhaps it was a whole week, but I think they may have been there for that length of time simply because of plane connections out.

Q: Did you feel they were fair in their assessments?

HEALY: Of course. As I say, it does not ring any strong bells in my memory so there clearly couldn't have been any problem.

Q: Yes. Getting back to your function, particularly the representational one, how often did you entertain officially?

HEALY: Well, a lot depended upon circumstances, whether we had visitors, for example, such as Warren Robbins, the museum director, or whether a particular occasion caused it, the visit of an American ship, for example, July Fourth certainly. I would say I probably entertained about once every week, perhaps ten days.

Q: Did you have a particular type of entertaining you preferred, such as a reception or a dinner?

HEALY: I generally tended to prefer a lunch or a dinner. Receptions are difficult in the sense that they're very tiring because you are on your feet for perhaps two hours. You have to make a very special effort to get around and talk to a large number of people, which means that you don't have a chance to engage in any discussion in depth with any one or two or three people. I generally found lunches and dinners more satisfactory from both the personal point of view and the professional point of view.

Q: Sure. Who planned your menus, and took care of the seating arrangements, and flowers, and that sort of thing?

HEALY: Generally speaking, I did, but my supervision was minimal because the household servants had been well trained by previous ambassadors' wives. They did the flowers or the gardeners did the flowers. I would select a menu and provide some kind of minimal oversight. I can remember that the first time I gave a lunch, I asked for curried chicken and discovered, only after all the buffet guests had gone through the line, that the cook had not cut the chicken into little pieces, but had produced chicken breasts for every guest [laughter]. Since it was buffet and people were supposed to be eating on their laps, it provided some difficulties and I was quite annoyed with the cook. He didn't do that again. But apart from little problems like that, they were well trained and I could just simply say, “We'll have this for the first course, this for the second, and we'll have this for dessert,” and that was it. I was not very demanding when it came to gourmet cooking. I couldn't be, of course. And with regard to desserts, I was normally content with a fresh fruit salad or some kind of a pudding.

Q: Did you import a lot of food from, say, Denmark?

HEALY: Yes, I imported virtually everything except some fresh stuff. Fruits in particular were available locally. Vegetables were a little hard to come by. Tomatoes were available, some lettuce, but by and large I imported everything from either the United States or, to some degree, from Denmark. Mostly from Denmark we imported the liquor.

Q: Were you able to eat lettuce, the local lettuce and fresh things?

HEALY: Oh, yes, the servants in the house were very well trained when it came to boiling water and preparing fresh fruits and vegetables. I had no trouble and I don't believe any of my guests did.

Q: Was it you who took care of the residence accounts?

HEALY: No, basically it was my secretary. And I must say my secretary was terribly efficient in this respect. She lived right next door in the staff housing and was very, very competent and conscientious about this kind of thing. As I recollect, the servants, the cook - is the one in particular who would buy some fresh fruits and vegetables and some fresh fish and shrimp and lobster - the cook would present bills and I would carry them into the office and Liliana would pay them, either directly to the merchant involved, or by sending the money home to the cook. But by and large, if a vendor came to the door with lobsters, for example, I normally relied on Liliana to decide whether they were needed. I'm afraid I also let Liliana do the bargaining on the price. She was an enormous help to me in that respect.

Q: How did you handle little things like dry cleaning and hair cuts and...

HEALY: There was no such thing as dry cleaning in town. I saw to it that I didn't buy anything that wasn't easily washable. There was one hair dresser in town, perhaps more than one, but the one I happened to go to was at a small hotel in the center of town. When I say small, I should say it was the hotel in the center of town, the other major hotels being out by the ocean front. The principle operator at the hairdressing shop was British, married to a lawyer, a Lebanese lawyer. She generally was able to get her hands on the equipment and the expendable supplies she needed. Perhaps, and my memory is a little vague on this, perhaps I did send to the States to a drugstore for the supplies for hair coloring. At this point I just don't even remember.

Q: Was the post considered unhealthy?

HEALY: Much of Sub-Saharan Africa and Western Africa is considered “unhealthy,” but what with the use of anti-malarials and with reasonable precautions, most people stayed pretty healthy. I myself was very fortunate. I had a problem with a skin rash and a problem with a bad back, but the bad back, of course, had nothing to do with West Africa. As for the skin rash, it eventually, after quite a long period of time, cleared up. It may have been an allergy, it may have been sun, it may have been heaven knows what.

Q: Sure. Did the mission have any health facilities? Did you have a first aid room?

HEALY: The embassy itself had nothing, but only a block away at Peace Corps headquarters, we had a health room staffed by the Peace Corps doctor, who was there except for the times he was traveling upcountry to look after the Peace Corps volunteers, or on a trip to Liberia, because he was also responsible for the Peace Corps volunteers in Liberia, as I recollect. But there was also a registered nurse, a Sierra Leonean registered nurse and a couple of medical technicians, and the embassy people used it regularly for consultations and shots and pills or whatever.

Q: Those medicines came from the States, I presume?

HEALY: I believe most of them did, yes, although certainly the Peace Corps doctor was in constant touch with local physicians and was able to refer people with specialized complaints, as for example my skin rash, to a local doctor.

Q: Did any of your people have to go to hospital while you were there?

HEALY: Let me think. I do know that we had a couple of people, in fact more than a couple, who had to be medically evacuated. Once or twice under emergency conditions, but normally just as a routine precaution, either for pregnancy or whatall. A few people

were hospitalized, yes. Generally speaking we used a private clinic or the military hospital up at Wilburforce.

Q: Excuse me, where's Wilburforce?

HEALY: Wilburforce is part of Freetown. It's a neighborhood in Freetown.

Q: I see.

HEALY: But fortunately most people managed to stay healthy enough to avoid the need for hospital treatment except for perhaps a day or two for observation.

Q: Were any babies born?

HEALY: While I was there I don't recollect that there were any babies born in Freetown. Before I came I do know that one young woman, a foreign service officer, did have her baby in Freetown.

Q: Otherwise they went up to Germany?

HEALY: It depends on the individual. The one baby born while I was in Freetown was born in Latin America because the mother was originally from one of the Latin American countries and she went back home to have her baby there.

Q: So the Department allows people to go where they wish in cases like that?

HEALY: Really, I'm not able to say. I think that the department would only pay for a trip to Germany for a pregnancy and this was cost reconstructed travel. I think that's the way it worked.

Q: Now you've mentioned Liliana. Was she the only personal secretary you had while you were at the post?

HEALY: Liliana was the only American secretary at the embassy. There was an American secretary in the AID mission, and I believe that was it. But Liliana acted as my secretary, as the confidential secretary to the entire mission, and her efforts were supplemented by part-time, temporary work on the part of one or two of the wives.

Q: I see. I can't recall, did you say you did or did not have women officers at the post?

HEALY: We had one woman officer by the time I left and there was... We're talking now about the Department of State?

Q: Yes.

HEALY: And there was one woman officer, I know, at post before I came. The one I mentioned who had her baby at post. Then we had, of course, one or two women professionals over at Peace Corps, not at AID, as I recollect. But we had one or two women, yes.

Q: And did they enjoy the post?

HEALY: I assume they did. I never sat down with them in particular as opposed to anyone else. Naturally when an ambassador sits down with somebody and says, “How are you enjoying the post?” you're not certain you're getting a very straight answer.

Q: That's true. What did the wives of your officers do to occupy their days?

HEALY: Most of the wives were busy at part-time jobs, or just raising their children. There weren't too many children at post, but the DCM's wife was raising her children. She was also a registered nurse, so she was a great help informally to a lot of people at post. A couple of the wives were occupied working as secretaries on a part-time basis at the embassy. One wife was in charge of running the self-help program on a part-time basis. Another wife was helping run the little commissary on a part-time basis. One of the

Peace Corps wives was doing some teaching of English, as I recollect. Most everybody interested in doing something was able to find something to do, even if it happened to be only volunteer work.

Q: Yes. So this kept morale high, I suppose?

HEALY: I would expect so, yes. I think that most people, as I say, found something to keep them busy and interested and happy.

Q: Sure. Did the wives help you out at parties? Did they help serve as assistant hostesses or that sort of thing?

HEALY: There was never anything as formal as that. I mean everybody knew that as Americans invited to my house, they were, in a sense, under a certain responsibility to see that things went smoothly, but I never said anything to them about it and so far as I recollect everybody pitched in to make the party a success, as any guest does.

Q: Yes, exactly. How often did you entertain your staff? Were they included in your parties?

HEALY: I made a special effort and Liliana helped me in this. I made a special effort to see that people were included regularly. I also, however, did not want to burden them, because being invited to receptions or dinner parties that are basically for official reasons, is not always something that a person wants to do. So there were many times when I would issue an invitation to an official reception or dinner, but through Liliana I would make it quite clear that if somebody did not really want to come or had something else of importance to do, it was not a command performance. Then when it came to entertaining the staff separately, I did that now and again, particularly to something like Thanksgiving dinner, when I might have twenty people or so over for a turkey dinner.

Q: What did you do for the Fourth of July?

HEALY: The usual reception. I tried to make it around lunch time or early evening, and I was sorely tempted to cut it down to nothing but a glass of champagne and a toast and everybody go home, but I never managed to get around to that.

Q: Was that strictly an all-American affair?

HEALY: Oh, no.

Q: It was not?

HEALY: Oh, no, no, no. For one thing I'd have a hard time coming up with enough Americans to make a reception. No, the July Fourth reception in the tradition of the Foreign Service is to entertain the members of the host government, not to entertain Americans.

Q: Funny, I've been at posts where it's been strictly American.

HEALY: If I gave a reception strictly for Americans, I would be paying for it out of my own pocket.

Q: That's true.

HEALY: I'm not about to give a reception for a host of hundreds, if I could find hundreds for that purpose. No, official representation is official representation. The July Fourth party was for members of the government of Sierra Leone and members of the diplomatic corps.

Q: Yes. What did you do for recreation, to keep yourself fit?

HEALY: I played tennis and I played golf. My back problem limited the tennis playing pretty severely. But I did manage to get around the golf course a couple of times a week, so I did have that amount of exercise.

Q: Was there any good place to swim?

HEALY: Oh, heavens, yes, Freetown has one of the loveliest beaches in West Africa. I'm not much of a swimmer, though, so it was not a sport that interested me.

Q: How did you obtain books and periodicals?

HEALY: I had my own subscriptions and we had a small post library. I know that when I first came, I brought along about a hundred paperbacks that I had selected indiscriminately from the supply of books that the American foreign service wives had upstairs, I guess on the eighth floor somewhere, in the Department of State, and every now and again I would send for another supply of any hundred paperbacks. I was not so much interested myself, I always seemed to have enough to read, as I was in restocking the little paperback library at the embassy. And of course every American, as soon as he would finish a paperback would put it back in the library, so there was a regular circulation.

Q: I get the feeling, Terry...

HEALY: We also had the library, of course, at USIS.

Q: Of course. Of course. I get the feeling that you were very concerned about your staff, that you wanted to make this sort of a family. Am I correct in thinking that?

HEALY: I am concerned, I always have been concerned about the staff, but I also am not the kind of person to interfere too much in their personal and private lives. Freetown is a small town already and I wanted to ensure that while I was aware of any difficulties anybody might have, and I was available to help if I could, and I certainly did everything I could to make life pleasant both at work and elsewhere for the staff, I did not want to give them the feeling that I was watching every move they made, that they had no privacy. So you have to walk a very thin line there.

Q: Yes, Did you travel a lot around the country?

HEALY: I traveled a fair amount within Sierra Leone itself, but not outside, no.

Q: This was official, was it?

HEALY: This was official within Sierra Leone, yes. But I did not have a chance to get to anywhere else in Africa, except for a three-day trip to Liberia, which was business.

Q: I see. Did you have young officers who were just starting out?

HEALY: Oh, heavens, yes.

Q: What steps did you take to assure that they got the proper training?

HEALY: Generally speaking, I would talk to them when they first came, indicate to them that my door was open, give them some general bits of advice, and just say, “Come talk to the DCM, come talk to me, come talk to Liliana.” We were a very small operation. As I've said, my main effort was to see to it that I kept out of people's hair, rather than the other way around. We saw each other every day, so there was always this continual exchange. The DCM, as well, had been charged with the responsibility of seeing to it that the new junior officers were given the guidance they needed.

Q: Were you able to rotate them in the various sections?

HEALY: No.

Q: You couldn't do that.

HEALY: The mission was much too small.

Q: I understand. What would you say were your major successes, Terry?

HEALY: That is very difficult to say.

Q: Yes, I know, it's an awkward question.

HEALY: Since there were few problems there, I certainly don't feel I can make any great claims to solving any. I would just say that I minded the store properly and left things in at least as good shape as I found them, and perhaps in better shape.

Q: Can you think of any way in which your being a woman contributed to your being able to carry this out?

HEALY: Not really. Not really. West Africa is very receptive to a business role for women or a social role, or even a leadership role for women, since some of the ethnic groups have, in fact, very frequently for many, many years in the past, had paramount chiefs who are women. I didn't feel that there was any great surprise at having a woman ambassador.

Q: How did you feel about the job when you finished? Were you well satisfied that you had done the best you could?

HEALY: Yes, I would say I was. I wish that in some other way, shape, and form I could have made a greater contribution to the welfare of Sierra Leone, but given the restrictions on the amount of AID available, the US government did what it could there. There was no possible way I could get the millions in AID I would have wanted to put the country right.

Q: Do you think, looking back, that your presence made a difference in Sierra Leone-US relations?

HEALY: That's impossible for me to say.

Q: After you returned to the United States, and before I get onto that, is there anything you'd like to add to sum up your experience and how you felt about the experience?

HEALY: No. No, I think what we have been touching on in these past hours has pretty well covered it.

Q: Fine. Well when you came back, did you have difficulty adjusting to life back in the States, a reverse culture shock?

HEALY: Not really. Not really. When I returned to the States I was assigned to the University of South Florida as a Foreign Affairs Fellow. I worked there at the Center for International Affairs for ten or eleven months. I remember one of the professors there saying to me that re-entry must be a problem for me, to leave the world that I had known as ambassador with a chauffeur-driven car and servants and a large house and come back to the United States where down in Florida I didn't even have a secretary, and I can remember saying to him, “No, Charlie, Sierra Leone was not the real world. This is the real world, where people make their own beds, and they buy their own food at the supermarket, and they make their own meals. They even sometimes have to struggle along without a secretary.” So I knew precisely where things fitted in properly and that being an ambassador is not the normal state of events.

Q: That's a good way to put it. And then after you were in Florida, you came here to Fort McNair?

HEALY: After a year in Florida when I did some... I taught a course of my own about the Foreign Service and I was a guest lecturer for a number of different professors and for a number of different organizations. I was a resource person, really.

Q: Were you called a diplomat-in-residence?

HEALY: No, I use that as a handy way of describing what I did, but there are two programs in the Department of State. One is diplomats-in-residence and the other is foreign affairs fellows. I was a foreign affairs fellow. Both do more or less the same kind of thing. The titles are different because of technicalities within the Department of State about funding

these positions. After a year down in Florida, I came up to Washington to serve on the faculty at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces here at Fort McNair. I had been a student ten years ago at the National War College and when the opportunity came up, I seized it, because I did enjoy my time there as a student, and thought I would enjoy just as much being on the faculty at the sister institution.

Q: You enjoy teaching?

HEALY: I do enjoy teaching. I don't think of myself as a natural teacher, but I do enjoy the academic atmosphere, the stimulation of being able to talk about a lot of different issues with people who know what they're talking about.

Q: What are you teaching here? Could you describe that for me?

HEALY: That gets a little bit difficult. Basically, I'm teaching in the international affairs phase of the curriculum here at the Industrial College. The core curriculum includes a great deal on economics, mobilization, manpower management, resource management, and my principle teaching responsibility has come in the phase that is devoted to international affairs.

Q: And your students are mainly from the armed forces?

HEALY: The students at the Industrial College are drawn principally from the different branches of the military services. About 75% of the student body comes from the military. The other 25% comes from the civilian employees of the US government, principally, the Department of State, Foreign Service, and the civilian employees of the Department of Defense. But we also will have one civil servant from the Department of Labor, one civil servant from Treasury, one civil servant from this, that, or the other agency of the government. They're generally colonels and lieutenant colonels or equivalent grades. They have been selected for this very senior training at either the National War College or

the Industrial College of the Armed Forces with a view to preparing them for more senior assignments yet.

Q: So it's quite a plum to be sent here?

HEALY: It's a select group, yes.

Q: Select group?

HEALY: Yes.

Q: How do they decide who goes to this college and who goes to the War College?

HEALY: A lot depends upon the interests of the student, a lot depends upon his background, what he wants to do, or she, I should say, because we do have female students at both colleges. I know that when I was selected for senior training, I specifically asked for the National War College, because I knew that the core curriculum at the Industrial College included a good bit of economics and I had already had, fairly recently, the intensive economic training course at the Foreign Service Institute. So I pointed out that I felt my economic strengths would be complemented by the political and strategic courses at the National War College. And I presume other students have other reasons for asking to be assigned to one or the other.

Q: Do you have any students from other countries?

HEALY: Not as part of the student body at the War College or the Industrial College, but the umbrella organization for both colleges and for three or four other institutions is the National Defense University. The National Defense University recently started a program to bring ten or eleven or so international fellows to Fort McNair every year from different allied or friendly countries overseas. These international fellows, and this year they come from such countries as Germany, Britain, Somalia, Korea, Peru, et cetera, these international fellows follow a curriculum of their own, but they are integrated for the

first few months into the core curriculum of the National War College, and then for perhaps the second half of the academic year into the core curriculum of the Industrial College.

Q: I see. Changing the subject now to one that concerns you, only you, do you consider yourself a feminist?

HEALY: That's a little bit hard to say. I've never been deeply involved in fighting for women's rights, but I have supported, for example, the Women's Action Organization in the Department of State by becoming a member. I would tend to say I'm probably middle of the road feminist. I realize that a lot of what has happened in the past has been part of the culture and it's a little bit unfair to lay it at the doorstep of a particular, individual man, unless that person turns out to be extremely prejudiced.

Q: Then that was your attitude towards the women's movements in the sixties, or did you think they were perhaps too strident? Sixties and seventies, I should say.

HEALY: Some were. Some were. I was just heavily involved in my own work, and I remember at the time that the Women's Action Organization became prominent in the Department of State, I, by pure chance, was more heavily involved in a different issue at the Department of State, which was whether or not the Foreign Service should become a union, should be unionized. And if so, whether the recognized union should be the professional association, AFSA (American Foreign Service Association), or whether it should be AFGE (American Federation of Government Employees), which was an already organized union of government employees. So for some reason I was not terribly aware of what was going on in the field of women's rights in the Department of State, although the two movements, one for a union and one for women's rights, were active at almost the exact same time.

Q: Which did you favor, the AFGE or the AFSA?

HEALY: I was in favor of having AFSA perform the functions.

Q: And they did indeed?

HEALY: Eventually it ended up that way, yes.

Q: As you look back can you think of anything along your career that you wish you had done differently?

HEALY: I'm sure if I thought hard, I'd find something, many things, in fact, I might have wished I'd done differently. But I'm almost equally certain that I'd probably never confess them to anyone. No, offhand I might have tried harder, for example, to get out of European Affairs. I might have decided that after five years in Common Market work in Washington, a move to work in Common Market affairs in Brussels was not the wisest thing. Various things like that I might have changed in retrospect, but that's a sort of fruitless occupation.

Q: It really is. But as an ambassador looking back, were you satisfied with the way you handled that assignment? Or, looking back, would you have changed [some things?

HEALY: Oh, I probably would have tried to do a little bit more, perhaps, in training junior officers personally, but then we had so few and they were so busy doing the work that there were really few so-called training opportunities. I might have been more active in one area or another, but once, again that's hindsight. You never have the opportunity to do over again things that you might wish [you had done differently].

Q: I'm just asking because part of the book is going to be to recommend to young women coming along things that they might want to look into themselves. What do you think is the future of women in the service?

HEALY: Well, I think the question itself should not need to be asked these days. I think the future of women in the Foreign Service is whatever they can make of it for themselves. The Foreign Service has, in my career time, always permitted women to enter. The department has not been as welcoming in past years, in early years, as it is today, but

I think that women have every opportunity, and it's up to them to make a career for themselves.

Q: Are there any characteristics thought of as typically feminine that make women more valuable than men in certain circumstances, or with certain groups of people?

HEALY: I would have to think about that very hard. I know I've heard people say that women make very good consular officers because they do tend to be patient with people's problems, and sympathetic, and that perhaps distressed people are more inclined to discuss their problems with women than with men. I don't know about that. I just cannot... I think you need a professional assessment for something like that.

Q: What about the idea that has been told me that, in emerging countries, women do a very good job because they are perceived as less threatening? Do you go along with that?

HEALY: I am not a professional in that field of human behavior. I don't know. I think too much depends upon the individuals involved to make generalizations.

Q: I see. Do you have any advice to give to young women who would like a career in the Foreign Service?

HEALY: Well, I would suggest they prepare themselves well or they will never get into the Foreign Service. I would suggest that they bring to the job requirements every bit of skill and dedication that they have. You cannot succeed in the Foreign Service by doing a half-hearted job. It's a job that demands a great deal of you. And I would hope they would recognize that the nature of diplomacy may be changing in future years, that it's becoming a profession that is more dangerous than it used to be, and one that will require perhaps greater language skills in the future than in the past.

Q: Why is that?

HEALY: How do you mean?

Q: That it would require more language skills?

HEALY: I think that thirty years ago the Department of State was not putting as much emphasis on language ability as it does today. I think that a lot of foreigners were more inclined to tolerate Americans who had no language skills. I think a lot of the people with whom we carried on most of our dealings spoke English. I'm thinking of western Europeans. I'm thinking of east Asians. But I think in this day and age... It has always been important to speak languages, but I think that it's becoming a tool that more and more will be demanded of Americans, whereas there's been more tolerance in the past for Americans who do not have language skills.

Q: That's a good point. What particular courses would you suggest that young women study?

HEALY: In order to join the Foreign Service?

Q: Yes.

HEALY: Anybody could provide that kind of information. Everybody says the same thing. They should take American history, American government, political science, international relations, the usual courses, twentieth century history.

Q: I've had it suggested they study law.

HEALY: I see no reason why they should spend three years studying law in order to come into the Foreign Service. You study law to become a lawyer, not to enter the Foreign Service. I would suggest that the intellectual discipline of studying law might be useful, but surely there are better ways of acquiring intellectual discipline than taking a three-year law course that you have no intention of using.

Q: What do you think about the classics, Terry? Do you think they would be of use?

HEALY: I've always thought that a rather traditional education is a very good background, provides a very good background for the Foreign Service. And whether that includes a study of classical thought, classical literature, Latin, is something else again. There's no real need for it, but certainly, I think, Latin provides an intellectual challenge and discipline, as does philosophy. And I would suggest that if somebody felt the need for training and intellectual discipline, philosophy, logic would be one way to go without wasting three years.

Q: What do you consider the most significant achievements of your life? That's an easy question to throw at somebody on a Friday morning. [laughter]

HEALY: No, it isn't, unfortunately. It's not a question with which I feel easy. You either give a glib answer or you give a terribly earnest and labored answer which conceals a great deal more than it reveals. I think I'll pass.

Q: You'll pass on that one, fine. Did you enjoy living abroad?

HEALY: I've always enjoyed living abroad, but I've always particularly enjoyed coming back home again. I was very careful throughout most of my career to see to it that after every overseas assignment, I came back to Washington.

Q: Did you have any problems that were unique to women living abroad or would they be problems that would be shared by all single people?

HEALY: I tend to say more the problems shared by all single people, trying to find the time to locate housing, trying to unpack, trying to establish some kind of acceptable household routine that didn't burden you too greatly, but did permit you to do some of the official entertaining that you had to do. But single people have the same problems.

Q: Is homesickness a problem to you or other people you know?

HEALY: Not really. The first time I left home to go overseas, I was so excited by the challenge that I don't recollect being homesick, although I was aware of the fact that I was missing certain family occasions, and that made me a little bit unhappy. The only time I can remember questioning whether I was doing the right thing is at the end of my first home leave. I'd been in the Foreign Service two years and I was leaving by plane to go back to Italy for another two years, and that was when I can remember sitting on the airplane thinking do I really want to keep on going through these good-byes and spending a couple of years away from my family? But after the next two years in Italy, I came back to Washington and realized that the challenge of the job was fascinating and that everybody leaves home eventually. You just cannot go back. So I came to terms with that.

Q: A very adult approach. Did you find that you had different work habits when you were abroad than you had in the States? Not so much habits, because I know you're a hard worker no matter where you are, but in the way you functioned? Did you find you had to be more aggressive in the States, is what I'm trying to say?

HEALY: No. No, I don't recollect noticing any difference. The only slight difference that might have existed would be that in dealing with Americans, whether overseas or in Washington, you can be pretty straightforward. You don't have to ask yourself whether you are transgressing certain cultural mores or whether you might give the impression of being a brash, fast-talking American, not so much a woman, just a brash, fast-talking American. Generally speaking when I dealt with foreigners overseas, I was very careful to be sure to observe any courtesies of which I was aware in dealing with them, because I realized I was not in my home environment.

Q: Yes, yes, yes. That's a good point. Do you think frequent service abroad helps or impedes progress to becoming a chief of mission? Better to be here or better to be there?

HEALY: You can't make a yes or no answer to that question. You're in the Foreign Service; you must serve overseas. There is no such thing as a foreign service officer who has served only overseas or only in Washington. There are many who would say that you make your career in both places, and with them I would agree. There are others who would say you have to pull political strings and the strings of personal relationships in Washington in order to obtain a chief of mission assignment. I don't know about that. I was stationed overseas when Washington telephoned to say that I had been selected for the Freetown assignment. I certainly didn't pull any strings.

Q: There is a movement that I understand is happening now, where people don't want to go abroad as much anymore, and I wondered how you felt about that, whether or not they were right?

HEALY: Well, things have changed. I know that twenty years ago I was one of the few people who always wanted a Washington assignment after a foreign assignment. Many of the families were perfectly willing to go from one foreign assignment to another, for financial reasons because it was easier to manage financially overseas on a very low salary than it was back in Washington. That has changed under the impact of women's rights and a changing and more hostile environment overseas. Now there are instances where, perhaps, some people are making the decision that they do not want to serve overseas, and particularly not in certain areas because of the dangers represented. Others are making the decision that at this particular time in the life of the family an overseas assignment is wrong because of schooling difficulties for their children...

Q: Because you were a woman, did you find much...?

HEALY: Your question puzzles me. I don't know quite what you mean by part of the action. You mean part of the action in the embassy, or part of the action vis-#-vis the foreign officials with whom I worked?

Q: That's a good point. Actually it has two prongs, one, in the embassy were you able to be given substantive, interesting jobs, and number two, if you did have a substantive job, such as reporting, were you able to get the appropriate response from the people you were dealing with?

HEALY: Yes, this touches on something I thought we'd discussed earlier. The only time I felt out of the action was in my first year in the Foreign Service when I was part of a fairly large staff at the consulate general in Naples. There I think part of the problem may have been the fact that the refugee relief program was winding down and we were somewhat overstaffed for a period there until the department could get around to transferring people out, as I was eventually transferred out to Milan, after just the one year. But certainly I felt that I was on the periphery of what was happening, but that may have been simply because the refugee program was winding down.

From then on, I did not have that feeling within the office or outside because I had very specifically defined responsibilities that went with my job. Those responsibilities were mine. I did not have to seize them, I did not have to fight anybody else for them, they were by definition part of my job. When it came to my reporting responsibilities, whether they were political or economic, they too were very clearly defined.

And when it came to working with people outside the office, as I've said, the title you carry with you is one that nobody can ignore because you have the full weight of your embassy behind you. I never did run into anybody who ignored the fact that I was the second secretary of embassy, for example, calling on somebody at the foreign ministry on a matter of business. They received me for what I was, the official representative of my embassy.

Q: Then, is it a fair statement to say that in your opinion the job title and the role that you play and the title you're given outweighs any considerations of sex or gender?

HEALY: In my experience and in the countries in which I have served, my answer would be yes.

Q: Good.

HEALY: But I have served in western European countries. I have served in New Zealand, and I have served in West Africa. And the answer that somebody, a woman, might give whose experience had been in Latin America or in the Middle East or in some parts of Asia, I simply do not know. I was very fortunate.

Q: Did you feel any impact of the woman's movement on your career?

HEALY: It's hard for me to be precise about that for the very reason that if I questioned a certain assignment, nobody was going to say, “You're being given that assignment because you're a woman” because that in itself would probably be a violation of regulation or whatever. But yes, there were certainly times when I felt, this would be probably more in the late seventies, when I felt that I had been given an assignment against my wishes because of feeling in the Department of State that the administration needed a woman in that office in order to deflect criticism on the part of the women's movement. I'm thinking in particular of an assignment from the National War College to the Board of Examiners. I did not particularly want the assignment and I think we have discussed this already.

Q: Yes, we have.

HEALY: I did not want the assignment but I gathered, and nobody, of course, would be precise about this because it would probably be actionable, I gathered that I was being assigned to the Board of Examiners because the people in personnel felt it important to place a woman in that particular office to avoid criticism that we were not including women in the recruitment process. As it turned out, as I've already said, it was a very happy year and I cannot complain.

But there have been other instances where assignments had been proposed which I judged, perhaps incorrectly, which I judged were for the same purpose. In other words, I was a fig leaf, or I was a flag to be flown to indicate that the department's heart was in the right place because, lo and behold, they had assigned a woman to this particular position. Whether or not it played a part in my selection for ambassadorship, I cannot tell. I was in New Zealand at the time. Certainly I questioned, I do ask myself, “Did it play a role?” and I don't know what answer to come up with.

Q: So then your feeling of this impact of the women's movement has been to a large extent negative, then?

HEALY: No, I wouldn't say negative, because for all I know, my selection for Sierra Leone was entirely due to the fact that I was a woman. I don't like to think that. I like to think that 27 years of doing what I think of as a very good job in the Foreign Service earned me that assignment. But I do have to raise the question. Was it a factor, and I have to say it could very likely have been a factor. So on the one hand, yes, I have been given assignments or I have been proposed for assignments that I didn't want because I was a woman, and on the other hand, perhaps I've received assignments I wanted also because I was a woman. So positive or negative, I can't play it all out.

Q: Sure. Did the fact of women's liberation have any effect on your views of yourself? Did you feel at all liberated?

HEALY: No.

Q: No?

HEALY: No, I mean I know who I am and I've more or less always known who I am. I would charge right ahead and do whatever I felt was something I wanted to do. And the fact that women's liberation came along has not changed me in that sense.

Q: Did you ever have any feelings that there were social expectations that you couldn't go beyond, such as in a job you could not picture yourself as giving orders to men underneath you?

HEALY: No. I was in effect professionalized by the Foreign Service, so what I saw being done at higher levels was automatically assumed by me to be the way I would act when I reached those higher levels. I made no distinction as between male and female because I've had female bosses.

Q: At other posts did any sex-connected views impinge on the way you lived? You were mostly in Europe, but you were in Italy which is supposed to be very male chauvinistic, were there any things you had to change there, places to visit, dress codes, or...?

HEALY: No. I'm a very modest person. I was brought up by the nuns and socialized in my religion. Since I tend to be a very retiring person anyway, I never had to modify my behavior, nor was it ever a problem overseas.

Q: Sure. Have you known of many instances where in families the daughter was expected to make the sacrifices with obligations to elderly parents?

HEALY: You're moving into an area with which I'm unfamiliar.

Q: You're unfamiliar with that.

HEALY: Are you talking about foreign service families?

Q: Yes.

HEALY: I wouldn't know. I just don't know.

Q: I see. Many foreign service women have had to assume the care of their mothers, for example. Another one had to give up her career to go home and take care of a sick sister.

HEALY: That would have to be a person's own decision.

Q: Yes. It's not something you're familiar with?

HEALY: Not really. I can't think of any instances where I remember saying, what a shame so and so has just given up a brilliant career in order to do something for the family. I probably am not inclined to think in those terms. Who knows what you're giving up? It might or might not have been a brilliant career.

Q: That's true.

HEALY: The fact that you are doing something you feel is right for a member of your family is quite admirable.

Q: Do you feel a woman DCM or ambassador does the job in the way a man does?

HEALY: We're talking about individuals. I can't make generalizations about men and women as DCMs or ambassadors because we're talking about a very small group of people and everybody is different and individual.

Q: How would you feel about a female DCM for yourself?

HEALY: It wouldn't trouble me.

Q: It wouldn't trouble you at all?

HEALY: Good heavens, no!

Q: How about a male secretary?

HEALY: That wouldn't trouble me either. I believe Anne Martindell had a male secretary in New Zealand. This is a little bit vague in my mind because I think it was only the latter part of - it would probably be within months of my own departure - but I do recollect that

there was a male secretary there. But it wouldn't trouble me to have a male secretary just so long as he did a highly competent job.

Q: Sure. You can remember back to when you were a very junior officer, when you went to social events, receptions, did men ever seek your opinions and listen to you, or did you find yourself off in a corner with the women?

HEALY: No, I did make a special point to see to it that that didn't happen. If I found myself in a corner with a group of women who were talking non-essentials, I can find that quite pleasant, number one, but number two, if I became sensitive to the fact that the males were grouping in one area and the females in another, I would try quietly, without making a point of it, I would try to move myself perhaps by taking another women with me over toward a male grouping and try to enter the conversation there.

Q: Very good. One last question. How would you describe your energy level?

HEALY: It's pretty high.

Q: I guess it would really have to be to carry out all of the different roles in the State Department.

HEALY: No, I would tend to say there are many women who are homemakers and mothers and workers and their energy level must be incredibly high too, or else they're always tired, one or the other. I just find I do have a good bit of energy, a good deal of physical energy, and this is one reason why I found tennis to be a very useful sport, because it takes up some of my physical energy, which work does not. In other words, the mental work that you do in the office is not physically tiring enough for me. I have to add to it something that is physical, and that is tennis.

Q: Are you able to do it now? Has your back problem cleared up?

HEALY: Thank goodness. It appears to be. Of course losing the weight is helping.

Q: Oh, I didn't realize that you had been heavier.

HEALY: Oh, yes, the more weight I lose, the easier it becomes to move. I still have trouble of course, but I'm playing tennis again, and able to play tennis, and that was something that the doctor did not predict two years ago.

Q: Good.

HEALY: He said that I would not be able to play tennis again.

Q: That's wonderful.

HEALY: Yes, I'm pleased.

Q: Thank you very, very much, Terry.

HEALY: You're welcome.

Q: You've been very helpful.

End of interview